

Baghdad rebuffs peace initiatives

Bush advised to delay land war up to a month

From Peter Stothard, US Editor, in Washington

THE White House has been warned that the land war to free Kuwait may have to wait for up to a month if as many enemy guns and tanks as possible are to be destroyed before the allied troops move in.

Richard Cheney, the American defence secretary, and General Colin Powell, chairman of the joint chiefs of staff, yesterday gave President Bush advice from Saudi Arabia cautioning against an early all-out ground offensive.

Mr Bush is, however, believed to be more concerned to finish the war quickly than his military advisers. He is under diplomatic pressure to begin the land war so that Soviet-backed peace initiatives are not encouraged.

The Soviet envoy, Yevgeny Primakov, left for Baghdad yesterday, reportedly to reassure President Saddam Hussein that he could escape future punishment if he withdrew his forces from Kuwait.

China's vice foreign minister, Yang Fuchang, also set off on a tour of Syria, Turkey, Yugoslavia and Iran in search of peace, and foreign ministers from 15 of the 105 non-

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aligned countries are to meet in Belgrade today to try to work out a way to end the fighting. The UN Security Council will meet tomorrow to discuss the conflict for the first time since the war began.

None of the initiatives is expected to succeed, with Baghdad radio proclaiming yesterday that Iraq would never withdraw from Kuwait or accept a ceasefire "except after achieving total victory".

The estimates of US casualties from a ground action were at the centre of the critical discussions on the future direction of Operation Desert Storm, officials said. General Powell and Mr Cheney, who met the president in the private quarters of the White House, backed a range of timing options, after briefings from the field commander, General Norman Schwarzkopf.

A US army spokesman in Riyadh said yesterday that the potential battle area was still "target rich" and that the air offensive had been intensified in the past 24 hours to near-record levels. But, in Washington, the debate about the next phase of the war continued, with several officials cautioning against reading too many assumptions into the formal briefings.

Well-informed Pentagon sources said that although more time for wearing down enemy forces was always useful, the reduction in US casualties from a three-week wait would, at best, be marginal. Intelligence estimates of how much bomb damage has

been suffered by the Iraqi Republican Guard vary widely and it is unlikely that they will be more conclusive in the near future, the sources said.

General Powell and Mr Cheney were said to have favoured a number of restricted ground actions inside Kuwait to tempt Saddam Hussein's best troops out of their protected positions. The movement of Iraqi forces would also help intelligence assessments of their threat to the main invasion force.

The White House yesterday expressed its growing nervousness at the success of Iraqi propaganda in influencing international opinion. The presidential spokesman Martin Fitzwater said it was "disturbing" that people were "buying" the reports of increasing civilian casualties inside Iraq. An Iraqi cabinet minister said yesterday that thousands of civilians had been killed by the allied bombardment. Previous government figures had put civilian casualties at about 650 dead and 750 wounded.

In Riyadh, the American spokesman pointed out that Basra, from which the Iraqis have put out pictures of burnt children in hospitals, was a "military city" whose military facilities were "woven into its very fabric".

Asked about reports that Iraq had established death camps in Kuwait and had moved American prisoners of war, including a woman soldier, to "human shields" in Basra, Mr Fitzwater said that, if true, these reports represented "the most vile kind of violation of human rights".

Iraq, which yesterday announced that it was calling up 17-year-old students, remained defiant, saying: "With every passing day, we become more certain of our victory. The resolve of the aggressors is weakening."

Allied leaders were at pains to point out that it was not, and both John Major and Douglas Hurd, the foreign secretary, went out of their way yesterday to reassure international opinion that the coalition forces were not going beyond the UN resolutions.



Like minds: John Major and Helmut Kohl after their meeting in Bonn yesterday, agreeing on almost everything except European unity

Producer index hits interest rate hopes

By ANATOLE KALETSKY
ECONOMICS CORRESPONDENT

HOPES of an early cut in interest rates were dashed yesterday by the announcement of an unexpected surge in January's wholesale prices. Producer prices jumped by 1.2 per cent as manufacturers responded to diminishing profits and intense cost pressures by adding to their new year price lists.

The increase in the producer price index (PPI) was the worst monthly figure since April 1981 and wiped out progress made against wholesale inflation since the recession began last summer. The index was 6.3 per cent above the level a year earlier and took the annual rate of wholesale inflation back to the peak of May and June.

Ministers had hoped the gradual decline in the annual rate of wholesale inflation from 6.3 per cent in June to 5.9 per cent in December would presage a general reduction in inflationary pressures. Since John Major made clear at the weekend that interest rates could fall only when inflation was clearly moving downwards, the figures appeared to rule out an easing of monetary policy, at least until the Budget next month.

Changes in wholesale prices are not automatically reflected in the retail price index, the main measure of inflation followed by the public. Government economists and ministers, however, have often cited the PPI as a more accurate measure of underlying inflationary trends. On this basis, yesterday's figure implied that the improvement in inflationary trends confidently forecast by ministers for more than a year had not even started.

Most economists took a less jaundiced view of what several described as a "rogue figure", and an official said the Treasury saw no reason to revise its forecasts of 5 per cent wholesale inflation and 5.5 per cent retail inflation by the fourth quarter of the year.

Parliament, page 7
Full report, page 19

Major and Kohl stage display of unity after talks in Bonn

From Ian Murray in Bonn

ANGLO-German relations are entering a new era of close co-operation, John Major, the prime minister, and Helmut Kohl, the German chancellor, made plain here yesterday after a wide-ranging exchange of views on everything from the Gulf war to South Africa and the negotiations on the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade.

Both said, after what Herr Kohl described as "intensive" talks, that during their two-and-a-half hour meeting they shared the same view on most subjects, except European union, and even on that both sounded confident of eventual agreement. Although no specific agreements emerged from the meeting, the two promised to step up their bilateral contacts with frequent further meetings, beginning next month when Mr Major has invited the chancellor to "see a bit more of the English countryside when the weather is better".

On the two major international problems of the day, there appeared to be unanimity. Mr Major said that there was "no difference in our assessment of the Gulf", and, as far as the Baltic states were

"the closest possible relationship" with Herr Kohl's Christian Democratic Union.

The two men had discussed developments in the Soviet Union with concern, and agreed that they wanted to see President Gorbachev pursue what Herr Kohl called "a policy of openness in dealing with the problems which come up, finding solutions through peaceful means". Both also emphasised the importance of successfully completing the GATT negotiations, in which Germany has so far not been prepared to make necessary compromises on farm policy.

The most obvious sign that relations were on a new footing, however, was in their approach to European Community unity. Whereas Mrs Thatcher played up differences, Mr Major insisted that, even though negotiations were only just starting, there were many areas of agreement. Britain, he promised, would enter fully into the inter-governmental conferences

"with clear ideas which we will put before our partners".

The prize of agreement was considerable and Mr Major was optimistic that at the end of the negotiations "we will have an agreement which each of us will be able to put to our parliament for ratification".

Herr Kohl also insisted that the differences would be overcome. After 300 years of growing apart, it was too much to expect that EC countries would grow together in 30 years, Germany, however, had a constitutional obligation to work for European unity, but it had no intention of backing anyone into a corner - "least of all our British friends".

"On the way to union, maybe we will have to make a detour", he admitted, "but in politics the detour often turns out to be the shortest cut".

Mr Major later visited an army base at Munster and RAF Bruggen, and met families of Gulf servicemen.

Leading article, page 11

Gunmen kill 17 in Natal

Seventeen people have been killed by gunmen who ambushed buses carrying passengers home from a prayer meeting in Natal. The African National Congress has been accused of planning the attack.

The trial of Winnie Mandela on kidnapping and assault charges was adjourned yesterday after a key witness was abducted from a church in Johannesburg. Page 9

Election plea

Christopher Patten, the Tory party chairman, has tried to defuse talk about an early general election. He said that the most important factor would be the economy, which was "going through a tough time". Page 7

Couple freed

A couple jailed for 12 years in 1988 for killing their baby daughter have been freed by the Court of Appeal on the ground that the evidence against them did not indicate which parent had inflicted the fatal injuries. Page 4

Lithuania appeal

Vytautas Landsbergis, the president of Lithuania, has appealed for greater Western support for his republic's independence. He fears Soviet military action. Page 8

Air fare war

Huge discounts are available on international fares as airlines dump thousands of unsold tickets on "bucket" shops in a move to beat the industry recession. Page 18

Curb on players

The Rugby Football Union has banned an advertisement featuring four England players from inclusion in the programme for Saturday's match against Scotland. Page 38

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MPs angered by rail shortcomings

By MICHAEL DYNES AND OUR PARLIAMENTARY STAFF

AS WEATHERMEN forecast that Britain would remain largely snowbound until the end of the week, Conservative backbenchers yesterday voiced anger that British Rail's most up-to-date trains were apparently unable to deal with the severe weather.

Under fire from both sides of the House, Malcolm Rifkind, the transport secretary, promised to pass complaints to Sir Bob Reid, chairman of British Rail. He told MPs during Commons question time: "It is a matter of some very considerable concern that brand new rolling stock, very recently introduced, should be incapable of dealing with the sort of circumstances we have seen during the last few days."

John Prescott, Labour's transport spokesman, accused the government of ranting about investment levels while avoiding its own responsibility.

Black ice alert, page 5

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Toboggan art, page 14

Political sketch, page 18

ities. Keith Hampson, Conservative MP for Leeds North West, said that in spite of heavy investment in electrification, the Leeds to London line had ground to a halt yesterday. Mr Rifkind said it appeared that snow sucked into the engines of new trains had caused overheating.

British Rail said engineers were examining ways of preventing the faults. About one third of Network South-East's passenger fleet was out of operation yesterday because of difficulties with engines and carriage doors.

Fine snow found its way into the electric engines of large numbers of locomotives, creating a damp atmosphere which led to short-circuits. Continued on page 18, col 1

Deng would use troops to crush Hong Kong

From Jonathan Braude in Hong Kong

IN A chilling reminder of China's suppression of the pro-democracy movement in Peking's Tiananmen Square, Deng Xiaoping, the senior Chinese leader, has said he would be prepared to send in the troops to crush any rebellion in Hong Kong after 1997.

Mr Deng also insisted that socialism would continue in China for generations and warned against British "tricks" in Hong Kong. The Chinese believe that Britain is trying to extend its political influence in the territory beyond 1997 by bringing in greater democracy, while diverting wealth out of the colony by overspending on massive capital projects, like the proposed new airport.

The most important thing is to be vigilant against Britain playing political tricks, thus leaving a big burden on the SAR (Special Autonomous Region) government," Deng continued on page 18, col 5

Hearing opens, page 9

Secrets of snow flakes made crystal clear

By NICK NUTTALL
TECHNOLOGY CORRESPONDENT

A BRITISH scientist has solved one of the mysteries of how snow flakes form by discovering why some fall as stars while others fall as tiny plates of ice. Snow can fall as six-sided columns and needles, petal-like plates or six-pointed stars depending on the levels of water vapour in the air and the temperature of the cloud in which the crystals grow.

The size at which ice plates - hexagons of frozen water - grow into stars, ferns or stellar dendrites has long puzzled scientists. John Mason, a physicist at Imperial College London, has now discovered evidence that the plates can grow points and evolve into stars only if they are smaller than a millimetre. He

has found that a water molecule and its two legs of hydrogen atoms can "walk" up to 25,000 paces across the surface of a growing snow crystal before it becomes part of a ice plate or ice column.

When temperatures are between -3C and -3C a water molecule will move over the edge of a plate and become deposited underneath to form needles or hollow prisms. Below this temperature plates appear in which the water molecule paces across the surface and is fixed on the edge rather than continuing over the side. Stars, ferns or stellar dendrites emerge between -10C and -20C. Below -25C prismatic ice columns are formed.

Peter Jonas, a climatic physicist at UMIST in Manchester, said that in

some clouds, forming ice needles can be whirled up into colder regions of the cloud and become capped by plates. Professor Mason is still puzzled why this happens. "Why snow crystals shapes are so sensitive to temperature is a mystery. We do not know of this in any other substance," he said.

British Rail has complained that the type of snow which has been falling has made it difficult to clear tracks and run services because it has been lighter and more easily blown by the wind into points and rolling stock. Professor Mason said this was because lower surface temperatures had meant that the snowflakes were smaller, drier and less well packed than is normally the case in Britain.

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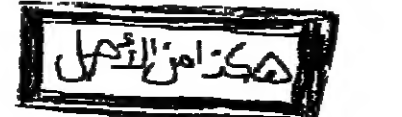
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West stunned by enormous scale of Iraqi fighting machine

IDENTICAL remarks by the American and British defence secretaries in the past few days have underlined the way the West has been taken aback by the breadth of Iraq's military infrastructure. Both Richard Cheney, the US defence secretary, and Tom King, his British counterpart, said they had been struck by the enormous size of the Iraqi military establishment. It was almost as if they were unaware of what President Saddam Hussein had been up to in recent years.

While it is easy with hindsight to be critical of the blind eye turned to Iraq as it built up its war machine, it seems incredible that even America, with all its intelligence capabilities, did not know about the development of underground bunkers, giant ammunition storage sites, and networks of command and control

facilities. It is only now that the West has been forced to realise that, even during the conflict with Iran, Saddam must have been engaged in long-term planning to fight a much more strategic war in his bid for Arab world hegemony.

Saddam's nuclear ambitions had been well charted, which is perhaps one reason why the West failed effectively to monitor his build-up of conventional arms. It is not so much a question of tank and artillery numbers. What has taken the alliance by surprise is the scale of Iraq's capabilities in dispersion, duplication and deception. These three vital elements of Saddam's military machine say more about his long-term war aims than any purchase of Western weapon systems. These capabilities have also been the cause of the allies' greatest

Allied predictions that the conflict would last just six days were based on a failure to grasp that Iraq was a first-division player in the war game, Michael Evans writes

source of discomfort. With such wide dispersal of equipment, duplication of communications systems and extensive use of decoys and dummies, an accurate assessment of the damage caused by allied bombers has been almost impossible.

Some of the statistics on Iraq's armament which have been produced by intelligence officers in recent weeks have created such a feeling of awe that the defence ministry last week produced a series of artist's impressions to show how large parts of Iraq have been turned into military zones.

For example, one of the largest air bases covers 11,000 acres. Heathrow covers only 4,000. The chemical weapons production site at Samarra in central Iraq is nearly five miles long and a typical Iraqi ammunition store covers some 18 square miles. To destroy a site of such scale would require hundreds of sorties, with each aircraft designated to hit individual bunkers, which are kept apart to avoid mass explosions. One bombing raid did strike lucky, setting off a tripping and destroying 137 ammunition bunkers. Even that, however, still

left 863 bunkers at the site intact. This growing appreciation of Iraq's military infrastructure is one of the main reasons why allied commanders have sought to delay the land campaign. With such extensive stocks of ammunition, it seems likely that Saddam will have moved enough shells, bullets and missiles to the front to last months. Allied bombers have been cutting off the supply chain since January 17, but the Iraqis had six months in which to ferry their ammunition to the front before the first allied bombers arrived. Allied commanders dare not begin their land campaign until they are reasonably confident that these stocks have been seriously depleted.

As so often in the arms-trade, the West ignored the warnings, even when Iraq boasted of its

indigenous weapons programmes. Its ability to manufacture ballistic missiles, for example, appeared to take everyone by surprise. Nobody believed it when Iraq's military scientists spoke of how they were adapting sophisticated Western equipment to suit their own needs. And yet, at a Baghdad arms exhibition in April 1989, the Iraqis showed off equipment locally manufactured, although with foreign assistance, including the Assad Babyle, a modified Soviet T-72 tank, the Majnoon 155mm howitzer, and the Al Fao 210mm howitzer.

Mr Cheney and Mr King appear to have been astonished by the way in which the tentacles of the Iraqi military establishment spread to every corner of the country, even though the evidence for this war infrastructure is clearly documented in the

hundreds of contracts signed in recent years between Baghdad and Western companies to build bases and bunkers. It is true, however, that, until last summer, Iraq was not a prime target of Western intelligence gathering. Only Israel would have kept a close eye on Saddam's ambitions. If the Israelis warned Washington, presumably they were ignored. Israel, of course, suffered its own intelligence failures in the 1970s, which is why it was caught out by the Yom Kippur war in 1973.

The West simply did not rate Iraq as a first-division country with a sophisticated war machine — which is why early predictions by some Pentagon officials envisaged a war lasting just six days.

John Ballen, page 10

DIPLOMACY

Moscow and Peking go through motions of peacemaking

From MARY DEJEVSKY IN MOSCOW AND CATHERINE SAMPSON IN PEKING

PRESIDENT Gorbachev's special envoy, Yevgeny Primakov, set off for Baghdad yesterday, accompanied by the best wishes, but faint hopes, of the Soviet leadership. Commenting on his mission, the foreign ministry spokesman, Vitali Churkin, said: "I would not want to raise expectations at all. They have given us no hint at all of their willingness to change their rather rigid position."

Mr Churkin also announced that the French foreign minister, Roland Dumas, would visit Moscow today for discussions on the Gulf and other topics. China's special envoy, Yang Fuchang, a deputy foreign minister, left Peking yesterday for the Middle East. He is to visit Syria, Turkey, Iran and Yugoslavia.

Diplomats in the Chinese capital believe that he carried with

him no specific peace plan, and China's foreign ministry gave no details of his mission. The sources say his tour is intended to show that China is concerned about the war in the Gulf and is now trying to stop it.

A senior Soviet official emphasised yesterday that Moscow had to keep on trying to persuade President Saddam Hussein to withdraw his troops from Kuwait, even as the Iraqi leader himself was insisting that he would never withdraw. Aleksandr Dzasokhov, chairman of the Soviet parliament's foreign affairs committee and an influential member of the Communist party leadership, said that Mr Primakov was going to Baghdad at Moscow's initiative, but with the agreement of Iraq.

During a detailed question and

answer session with reporters, Mr Dzasokhov offered several pointers to the current Soviet position on the war and its implications for the Soviet Union. He emphasised Soviet concern, made plain at the weekend in President Gorbachev's statement that the war was escalating beyond the bounds originally envisaged by the United Nations resolutions, but also appeared to accept US assurances, given to the foreign minister, Aleksandr Bessmertnykh, in Washington two weeks ago, that America did not want the destruction of Iraq and harboured no ill will towards the Iraqi people.

At the same time, he hinted at the levers Moscow might be using with Washington behind the scenes to ensure that its voice was heard. "The war," he said, "must not become a reason for a setback for the welcome process in international relations which made it possible to end the Cold War."

He also said that the Soviet Union was monitoring the situation closely. "Everybody who contributed to formulating the security council resolution must pay maximum attention to its provisions."

He hinted at the stance Moscow might adopt at the coming meeting of the UN security council. He expressed concern that none of the combatants had specifically renounced the use of "chemical, bacteriological and especially nuclear weapons" and urged them to do so. "The use of such weapons," he said, "should be regarded as a crime against humanity." On options for a ceasefire, he said that Moscow found the Iranian peace plan "attractive" and regretted that it had been "frozen".

Mr Dzasokhov also demonstrated that Soviet officials, like their counterparts elsewhere, are formulating their policy on a postwar settlement and trying to ensure that Moscow does not lose out.

Leading article, page 11

Rafsanjani says Iraq is despotic

By HAZRAT TEIMOURIAN

PRESIDENT Rafsanjani of Iran yesterday denounced the Iraqi government as "despotic" after learning that the much-publicised peace plan he had put to Baghdad last week had been turned down. Addressing a crowd of Islamic activists in Tehran celebrating the 12th anniversary of the revolution that overthrew the shah, he said Iran wanted the "situation in the Persian Gulf region to return to the time before Iraq invaded Kuwait". He defended his government's declared neutrality even though, he said, "a large number of the world's states have aligned themselves with the American aggressor".

Iran has denounced the United Nations' approval for the use of force to recover Kuwait as aggression, saying that the Muslim states would have eventually found a way of their own to settle the dispute. Mr Rafsanjani also said "approved the illegal takeover of independent Kuwait due to their subservience to another despotic power". This was clearly a reference to Jordan and a number of other countries that have refused to condemn the seizure of Kuwait and downgrade their relations with Baghdad.

Officials said the crowd was half a million strong. But independent sources put the figure as being much smaller and said that many participants were government employees.

The Iranian media are controlled by Islamic radicals and have recently exaggerated accounts of civilian damage in the Shia parts of southern and central Iraq in the allied bombing. Mr Rafsanjani was seen in Tehran as proof that the president had isolated the ultra-radical wing of

the ruling clerical establishment, which wants Iran to join Iraq by declaring a holy war, a *jihad*, after the United States and its allies. Mr Rafsanjani had earlier described such a policy as suicidal for Iran.

Public opinion in the country remains solidly anti-Iraqi. Iran lost an estimated 700,000 soldiers during the first Gulf war, which Saddam Hussein launched against it.

As Mr Rafsanjani addressed the Tehran crowd, his foreign minister, Dr Ali Akbar Velayati, arrived in Belgrade, telling delegates of the non-aligned movement that Iran would continue its peace efforts. However, the assertion did not carry much conviction coming, as it did, after the denunciation in Tehran of the Iraqi government.

During a detailed question and

WAR IN THE GULF: DAY 26

ALLIED FORCES

SORTIES: Over 59,800 air missions flown since the war began. More than 2,900 sorties were flown during the past 24 hours (750 against Iraqi forces in Kuwait).

LOSSES: American servicemen are being held as a POW by Iraq, according to an Iraqi POW. The woman and another American have been moved to Basra. Thirty allied troops have been killed in action — 12 Americans and 18 Saudis. Twenty-two American listed non-combat deaths. Allies lost 44 missing in action, including 26 Americans, eight British and one Italian and 12 prisoners of war.

CLAIMS: U.S. F-15 planes have destroyed four Iraqi mobile Scud missile launchers. B-52s destroyed an arms and ammunition dump. USAF and RAF destroyed an Iraqi patrol boat. 300 Algerian mujahideen guerrillas have joined the alliance. The US said 75 Iraqi

soldiers surrendered in past 24 hours. Iraqi POWs number more than 1,000.

IRAQI FORCES

CLAIMS: Baghdad radio reported fresh allied air strikes and said 57 raids hit residential areas on Sunday night. Iraq said it would never accept a ceasefire with the U.S.-led forces in the Gulf war. Newspapers said the ground battle was near and vowed to avenge continued allied air strikes on its territory and residential areas. The general conscription directorate asked all 17-year-olds to report.

UN SECURITY COUNCIL: Resolution 678 authorises Kuwait's allies to "use all necessary means" to uphold previous resolutions calling for the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of Iraqi forces from Kuwait and its government's restoration. It also calls on the nations "to restore international peace and security in the area".

ALLIED WAR AIMS

UN Security Council resolution 678 authorises Kuwait's allies to "use all necessary means" to uphold previous resolutions calling for the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of Iraqi forces from Kuwait and its government's restoration. It also calls on the nations "to restore international peace and security in the area".



Lines of communication: Signalman Stuart Carlson, aged 21, of 16th Royal Corps of Signals, takes advantage of a break to get to know a local militiaman in Saudi Arabia

KUWAIT

Exiles accept that elections must await reconstruction

By MICHAEL BINYON, DIPLOMATIC EDITOR

THE announcement by the exiled Kuwaiti government ruling out early elections was accepted by Kuwaiti exiles yesterday as inevitable because of the need to rebuild and repopulate their homeland first.

Badr Jassim al-Yaqoub, the exiled information minister, said in Taif, Saudi Arabia, that a period of martial law might be needed first, but the government would adhere to the 1962 constitution guaranteeing democracy. He said Kuwait had been destroyed by aggression and everything had been burnt.

Kuwaiti activists, pressing for full democracy, agreed yesterday that elections could not be held until most of the exiles had returned. Only about 350,000 Kuwaitis remain under Iraqi occupation, with about half the prewar population now in exile. Most are in the Gulf. About 30,000 are in Egypt, and some 6,000 in Britain.

They could not return until basic necessities had been rebuilt. Dr Jassim Ali, spokesman for the Association for Free Kuwait, said yesterday. Until damaged houses, hospitals, roads and public buildings had been repaired, the country would not be able to absorb its exiles. He said logistics would make elections impossible for at least four months, but hoped they could be organised as soon as possible after that.

The Kuwaiti opposition sank its difference with the ruling al-Sabah family in December, when both sides agreed to work first for the liberation of their country. Pro-democracy activists have just announced a new 60-member National Constitutional Front to fight for the restoration of democracy. Each of the six main political groups will be represented by five members.

Western leaders emphasised that full democracy "must be implemented once Kuwait is freed."

Strongly aware of the unpopularity and prodigious image of the ruling family throughout the Arab world, they have been putting discreet pressure on Kuwaiti leaders to agree to constitutional reforms that would reduce the power of the al-Sabah family. Paris especially believes it would be disastrous for the West to be seen waging a war primarily to restore the old privileges of the royal family.

Kuwait has enjoyed a parliamentary system and relatively free press during its 30 years of independence. But the 1962 constitution enshrines the powerful position of the ruling family. The Kuwaiti opposition wants a greater say in the country's affairs, and has voiced fears that promises made in exile may not be upheld once the Iraqis are driven out.

The 50-member parliament was dissolved by the emir, Jaber al-Ahmed al-Sabah, in 1986 at the height of the Iran-Iraq war.

Rebuilding plans split Europe and US

Brussels — Significant differences are opening up between rival post-war reconstruction and stabilisation plans for the Gulf being developed by the European Commission and the United States (George Brock writes).

American reconstruction schemes include a new Middle East development bank. European officials say that should not be necessary since many countries in the region are already members of the International Monetary Fund or the World Bank.

British officials agree. Douglas Hurd, the foreign secretary, told his counterparts recently that the smaller Gulf states were more interested in future military security than in development aid.

Britain is sceptical of both America's bank and of the scale and cost of the long-term plans being drafted by the commission. Diplomats argue that the European Community already has some \$4 billion in aid in the pipeline for the region and should wait before raising more.

The thrust of the commission plans is for enough aid to improve "social justice", and to take some of the sting from Arab nationalism, in countries as far apart as Tunisia and Iran. "Saddam Hussein doesn't come out of nowhere, you know," said one official.

Meeting urged

Rome — Douglas Hurd, the foreign secretary, in Rome yesterday for talks with the Italian foreign and prime ministers, said he was "in favour of having soon a meeting of the foreign ministers of the European Community and the foreign ministers of the Gulf states" to discuss plans for postwar peace and security. But he underlined that "only progress that comes from the region will put down roots and have a chance of success."

French-US talks

Paris — Pierre Joxe, the French defence minister, will travel to Washington today for talks with Richard Cheney, his American counterpart, which are likely to concentrate on a French role in a ground assault on Iraqi forces. He flies to Saudi Arabia on Thursday to inspect French army units. The further 670 troops. France is sending to join the 12,000 already stationed in the Gulf left France yesterday aboard ships from Toulon.

Carter's legacy

Washington — The beating that Iraqi forces have been taking in the Gulf war can be traced in large part to key decisions on weapons development by Jimmy Carter. It was the former president's decision to develop such weapons as the cruise missile and the stealth fighter which military leaders say have been used to devastating effect. The irony is that Mr Carter was pilloried for his military policies in 1980, the year he lost the presidential election. (AP)

'15,000' troops die

Cairo — Iraq has secretly told three friendly countries that the allied bombing campaign has destroyed 14 military installations and killed 15,000 Iraqi soldiers guarding them, the Cairo weekly newspaper *Al-Hakika* reported. It also quoted an Egyptian doctor who recently fled from Iraq as saying that 50 Iraqi soldiers had died from anthrax after 852 bombers had destroyed a depot they were guarding where the deadly toxins were stored. (AP)

Shamir grateful

Bonn — Yitzhak Shamir, the Israeli prime minister, yesterday sent a warm letter of thanks for aid and military equipment to Helmut Kohl, the German chancellor. He welcomed statements that Germany stood by Israel and hoped that economic and defence relations between them would deepen, and that Germany "would use its growing influence inside the European Council to support Israel's position and efforts for stability and peace."

Saddam's air force still has hidden power to strike allies

By JOHN ROBERTS

THE American military believes that the best pilots in the Iraqi air force have stayed at home, while the less accomplished have now flown 121 combat aircraft out to Iran. This assessment is based on the large number of aircraft that have crashed on the way over and the reaction of pilots under attack by the Americans.

"There were a couple of incidences where we've shot these guys down, where they were going low and fast and they definitely had to know they'd been locked on and they didn't go into proper evasive tactics... very inexperienced pilots," according to one military source. The term "locked on" means the aircraft has been picked up by hostile radar and is about to be attacked.

The large number of frontline combat

aircraft now in Iran could mean that Iraqi pilots will still try to stage desperate attacks on raiding allied aircraft. Before the war started, few people realized how well dug-in the Iraqi air force was, and even fewer expected them to remain in their shelters during the early days of the allied air attack. The conventional wisdom was that they would rise to repel the attack and largely be destroyed in the first 48 hours.

As a result, reports have concentrated on the size of the prewar Iraqi fighter/attack forces, around 800 aircraft. There have been well over 100 shot down or confirmed destroyed on the ground, and in addition to 121 flown to safety in Iran it is reasonable to assume that at least another 100 have been destroyed, even though unconfirmed, in air attacks.

Thus it is possible, some suggest, that the Iraqis still retain around 500 aircraft. The popular misconception, however, is the simplistic notion that all these remaining aircraft are fully operational, and are modern combat aircraft.

It is likely that between 15 and 20 per cent of the original aircraft were out of commission awaiting parts and maintenance, and remain so even if not destroyed. While the Iraqis may have begun the war with around 100 Mirage F-1Es, nearly 100 MiG-23s, Floggers, more than 40 MiG-29s, possibly 20 new Su-24 Fencers, and a few other advanced aircraft, the remaining aircraft are a mixture of reconnaissance, training and obsolete aircraft.

The 150 MiG-21s, although of the Vietnam era, can still carry bombs and missiles and be effective, but they cannot

survive long, nor can the less manoeuvrable Mirages, Floggers and Fencers, against either the long-range radar missiles or the close-in dogfighting capability of the allied air forces.

Pinpoint attacks with 2,000-lb. laser-guided bombs and penetration warhead munitions on hardened aircraft shelters have methodically destroyed many of Iraq's protected aircraft. The ability of more than 100 aircraft to remain untouched by air attacks for two weeks and then fly to Iran — including the huge IL-76 AWACS aircraft and other transports — demonstrates the effectiveness of the Iraqi hardened-shelter system; but these are steadily being eliminated.

As a result of this analysis, and further attacks on remaining shelters, it is likely that the Iraqi air force is unlikely to mount any meaningful attack in the war

that remains, even a last-gasp or suicide effort. But the threat that must be kept in mind is that posed by between 50 and 100 advanced fighters hidden in caves, buildings, underground facilities and unrecognized shelters and capable of using short, dirt or grass strips.

The superb MiG-29, similar in air-to-air dogfighting capability to the US F-15 and F-16 fighters, has a unique air-intake system which closes the normal forward intakes and draws engine air from louvers on top of the wings allowing it to operate on grass or innocent-looking sections of country road without fear of foreign-object damage to the engines.

(John Roberts is a former USAF fighter pilot with 134 combat missions in Vietnam, flying F4 Phantoms, to his credit. He is currently writing a book on the world's air forces.)

WAR AT SEA

British helicopters destroy two Iraqi fast patrol boats

FROM JAMIE DEITMER IN THE GULF AND OUR FOREIGN STAFF

TWO Iraqi patrol boats were left burning and wrecked yesterday after they were hit by missiles from Royal Navy Lynx helicopters.

The first engagement early yesterday morning took place in the dark when a Lynx attached to HMS Cardiff scored a direct hit on a Soviet-built Zhuk fast patrol boat. It was the first time in the war that a British Lynx had engaged the Iraqis at night.

Almost 12 hours later, a Lynx attached to HMS Manchester, a Type-42 destroyer, attacked and destroyed an Iraqi coastal patrol boat. The mission was the first sortie by a Lynx from the destroyer during the conflict.

HMS Manchester arrived in the Gulf only recently to replace HMS Cardiff. The Zhuk patrol boat was cruising within a few miles of the Kuwaiti island of Faylakh when it was spotted by an American fighter flying routine combat air patrol. A Lynx from HMS Cardiff was called in and hit the boat with two Sea Skua missiles.

The attack was carried out by Lieutenant Guy Haywood, aged 26, and his co-pilot, Flight Lieutenant Phil Needham, aged 37. The mission was their fifth direct hit against Iraqi targets and makes them the most successful naval forces among the allied forces. An American aircraft followed up the Royal

Navy attack to destroy the boat. A helicopter from HMS London later reported that the Iraqi boat was burning, but there was no information about the crew. Zhuk boats carry five heavy machineguns and have crews of up to a dozen men.

Commander Adrian Nance, the senior officer on board HMS Cardiff, said: "The allied domination of the waters of the northern Gulf continues to show excellent teamwork between American and British units. Saddam Hussein's navy has nowhere to hide."

The coastal patrol boat hit by the Lynx from HMS Manchester was one of more than a dozen craft taken from the Kuwaitis by Iraq during the invasion last August. The boat, which was built by British defence manufacturer Vickers, was spotted near the same island. A Navy source said the boat was "reduced to a mangled wreck" after the attack during which two Sea Skuas were fired.

Sixteen Iraqi fast patrol boats have now been confirmed sunk or disabled by allied air strikes. A further five were thought to have been badly damaged. No allied navy forces have suffered casualties during the war. The Royal Navy also announced last night that a leading seaman, believed to be in his late twenties, was

stabbed to death on Saturday on board a Royal Fleet Auxiliary ship on patrol in the Gulf. The incident, on board RFA Sir Gallahad, a 5,500 ton transport vessel, followed a fist fight between the seaman and a young steward. The navy has refused to give any more details of the stabbing.

The navy's special investigation branch was informed of the murder and officers from the branch and Hampshire police will question the steward in Southampton. It is understood that within hours of the stabbing, the steward and the body, was flown to RFA Argus, the supply and hospital ship that was patrolling nearby. The steward was later taken by Sea King helicopter to Bahrain, from where he will fly to Britain.

Sir Gallahad's captain sought permission from Commander Sir Christopher Craig, the senior naval officer in the Middle East, to arrest the steward. He was held under the naval discipline act.

There were unconfirmed reports that the murdered man was stabbed several times in the chest and face. It is not clear how the fight between the two men started, but there are reports that they had been drinking. The murder took place in a cabin several hours after the initial fight.

This is the second stabbing incident to take place on board a British ship in the Gulf. A seaman was stabbed on board RFA Argus at Christmas after an argument. On that occasion, however, the victim sustained only minor injuries.

● **Rosyth farewell** - Wives and families said goodbye in sub-zero temperatures to the crews of three navy minesweepers as they left the Rosyth naval base yesterday for the Gulf.

The *Blackbeard*, *Bicester* and *Biscorn* will relieve the *Athena*, *Hurworth* and *Christina*, which have been in the Gulf for six months. The ships, leaving Rosyth, have had the latest sonar and minehunting equipment installed, as well as a radar-controlled weapons system. The 45-man crews have been involved in a two-month preparation programme.

Commander Michael Nixon, who will be in charge of the three boats, yesterday said: "The ships and crews are in a high state of readiness. Some of them saw action in the Iraq-Iran war and know what to expect."

(This dispatch is subject to allied reporting restrictions)



Foot first: Lieutenant James Cassels, commander of a three-tank squadron with the Desert Rats, puts his men through the Life Guards' weekly so-called "suicide test". Lieutenant Cassels, aged 22, whose father, Nick, trains the Prince of Wales's ranchers at Lambourn, Berkshire, insisted that the drill was as crucial to battlefield preparation

as cleaning a Challenger tank's powerful gun (Richard Kay writes). "If anything happens to our tanks then we are going to depend on our feet for safety. Bad hygiene... could actually affect our survival," the lieutenant said. The inspection is all part of preparation for the land battle to retake Kuwait and the squadron is part of the 14th/20th

Russars battlegroup, the spearhead of Brigadier Christopher Hamerbeck's 4th Armoured Brigade. Colonel Mike Vickery, the commanding officer, said: "We have to maintain the battle edge, but we are encouraging everyone to work off the tension with sport. We've organised soccer and volleyball matches. We have literally been on

the go since early November, firstly preparing the tanks for 7th brigade and then our own, followed by non-stop training. I am very proud of what they have achieved and now it is important, as we await our signal for action, that none of that is lost. But I am always reassured because I have a bunch of very pragmatic soldiers."

JORDAN

Defiant students march for Saddam and mourn friend

FROM RICHARD BEESTON IN AMMAN

THOUSANDS of Jordanian students marched through the country's largest university yesterday to support Iraq and mark the death of one of their colleagues, killed when he tried to infiltrate into Israel last week.

In a largely good-natured march through the campus of the University of Jordan in Amman, about 3,000 students, most of them Islamic fundamentalists, waved banners and chanted: "Jordan will not submit to blackmail."

In spite of the defiant turn of the rally, most of the university's 20,000 students paid little attention to the demonstration, although dozens of undergraduates questioned said they supported President Saddam Hussein.

At the start of the march scores of students knelt down on the university's playing fields to pray for Marwan Arandas aged 21, a student of the Sharia School who was killed with two university

graduates when they attempted to cross into Israel near Eilat last week, armed with machine guns and grenades.

"Everyone here would like to do the same as they did," said Salah, a computer science student. "We believe that if we die fighting the Israelis we will go to paradise."

However, her colleagues admitted that most of the young men and women who gathered for another Hattin, where Saladin won a victory over the crusaders in the Middle Ages, felt powerless or reluctant to take matters any further than public demonstration.

The rally was a good example of how King Hussein has defied expectations that his position could become untenable by allowing displays of anti-Western feeling while at the same time keeping a tight control over the security of his country. The careful domestic balancing act has also been reflected internationally, where the Jordanian monarch has been accused indirectly by Baghdad of "indifference" to the allied bombing of Iraq and by President Bush of moving "way over to Saddam's camp."

Yesterday amid a flurry of diplomatic moves to try to head off the likelihood of an all-out ground offensive by the allies against Iraq, King Hussein held talks with the Yassar Arafat, the PLO leader. It was the first visit by the Palestinian leader to Amman since hostilities started.

Modafinil has been developed by the drug company Lafon and a large-scale trial was carried out on volunteers by the French army two years ago. The drug has also been tested in hospitals as a treatment for certain sleep disorders, but has yet to be licensed for general use.

The results of the army tests have not been published, but indications are that the drug kept the soldiers awake for 48 hours and that they afterwards had little difficulty in getting to sleep. Only an additional three to four hours of sleep was needed to re-establish normal sleep patterns.

IRAQI FORCES

Threat of gas-filled mines in Kuwait

FROM REUTERS IN RIYADH

IRAQ may have sown mines filled with nerve and mustard gas in parts of southern Kuwait, an American military source said yesterday. US officers estimate that Iraq has laid half a million mines on the southern borders of Kuwait and Iraq to hinder an allied ground assault.

"The Iraqis were involved in mine warfare for many years against the Iranians. They bought large quantities from everyone in the world who would sell them and the mines they have include the most sophisticated in the world," the source said.

He added that there are some mines which could be filled with the kind of chemical agents Iraq used against Iranians and Kurds in the 1980s, but that American combat engineers were trained to deal with such devices.

The Iraqi minefields are part of an array of defences which also include barbed wire, tank trenches and sand ramps. Some of the trenches can be filled with oil and ignited.

Most of the technology for breaching these defences dates back at least to the second world war. New weapons such as fuel air explosives have not fully replaced the old methods, the source said. Fuel air explosives are dropped by parachute. They spray a mist of petrol vapour which is ignited in a high pressure blast. But some modern mines respond only to sustained pressure such as from a tank.

ROYAL AIR FORCE

Taking off with derogatory ditty in their hearts

FROM LIN JENKINS IN THE GULF

AS THE time for take-off approaches the incessant banter among the preparing RAF air crews gives way to long silences. All the men retreat into the privacy of their own thoughts until Major Peter Moody, songsheets in hand, stomps into the debriefing room. "Ears left, tunes of glory to stir the early morning blood. Welcome to another day in paradise," he says.

The rallying call is effective. Outside in the darkness, shadows rush higher and thicker to ensure that the aircraft are ready. Inside the atmosphere lifts with a rousing chorus of Major Moody's latest ditty. Most of the lyrics are unprintable, containing rude jokes and scathing remarks about President Saddam Hussein, usually referred to as "Soddim". One more palatable song, to the tune of "Those Magnificent Men in Their Flying Machines", goes: "Up, down, tanking around, Doing the biz and destroying the ground. We're so frightfully mean, We're magnificent men in our flying machines."

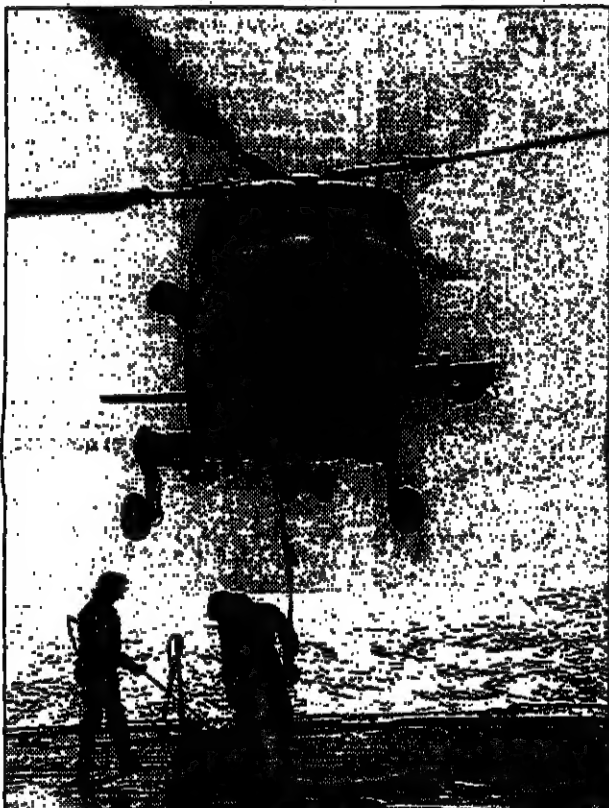
"Call it deliberately structured silliness," explains the major, aged 51. "In a way it is like massaging them into the right mood to get into the cockpit. I try whenever possible just to ease the edge of tension slightly. They just need something that is palatable by way of easing the tension."

Major Moody's distinctive style of briefing began more than four years ago when he was seconded from the 22nd (Cheshire) Regiment as ground liaison officer to 15 Squadron in Leurbach, Germany. "I started this initially as a means of attracting attention," he said. "Before the song he plays a few bars of military music and expects the men to stomp their feet in time. 'I used the military march from my own regiment played by the band and drums of the 1st Battalion the 22nd (Cheshire) Regiment.' He added that he would welcome a few cassettes of similar music from home to add variety to the menu."

Group Captain David Henderson, the detachment commander, is understandably grateful for anyone who can generate such an influence on morale, particularly when the crews prepare to fly into enemy territory where some of their friends have already been lost. "It is marvellous to have such a terrific character as the major here on base."

Major Moody gives special recognition to each aspect of operations in his songs, depending on the task in hand. The laser-guided bombing (LGB) missions of the tandem flights of Tornados and Buccaneers were set to the tune of "It's a long way to Tipperary".

It's a great thing LGBing. It's a great thing we know. It's a good thing to "dink" some bridges. And to see those roadways go. Farewell main supply routes. Hello T7 pics. For we'll all go LGBing. And then show our luts.



Delivery men: crew members of a British ship standing by as one of its Lynx helicopters brings in cargo

FIGHTING FITNESS

Iraqis battle chronic lack of sleep

By NIGEL HAWKES, SCIENCE EDITOR

ALLIED commanders in the Gulf believe that, however difficult it may be to measure the military effect of the prolonged bombardment of Iraq's forces, lack of sleep will unquestionably affect their morale and ability to fight.

Psychological studies over many years have shown that sleep deprivation has damaging effects on people's well-being and their ability to perform complex tasks. If Iraqi troops are kept awake night after night they will still be capable of brief bursts of effort but will make more and more mistakes and will eventually fall asleep regardless of their surroundings.

The effects are not, however, as great as might be

supposed. A series of experiments showed that, after three nights and days deprived of sleep, volunteers suffered no loss of physical strength and could still exert as powerful a grip as before. Their reaction times and speed in mental arithmetic was still as fast as before, but there was an increase in the tendency to make mistakes.

After longer periods of sleep deprivation the effects are more extreme, including hallucinations and paranoia. President Saddam Hussein appears well aware of the effects of sleep deprivation. The zombie-like performance of the allied pilots displayed on Iraqi television (and earlier, that of the journalist

Farzad Bazoft who was hanged by the Iraqis) is attributed by some psychologists to a combination of drugs and the denial of sleep. In the early 1970s British forces in Northern Ireland used sleep deprivation as a way of extracting confessions from terrorist suspects.

The French army believes that it may have a novel way of protecting its own troops from the effects of sleep deprivation. French troops may be given Modafinil, a drug that will keep them awake and alert for 48 hours, a French defence ministry spokesman has suggested.

Jean-Claude Rouvenne, chief medical officer in the defence ministry's health de-

partment, said that the anti-sleep drug would be given only to soldiers in "actions of capital importance". He gave as examples pilots on repeated missions and personnel loading munitions who needed to stay awake at all costs.

Modafinil has been developed by the drug company Lafon and a large-scale trial was carried out on volunteers by the French army two years ago. The drug has also been tested in hospitals as a treatment for certain sleep disorders, but has yet to be licensed for general use.

The results of the army tests have not been published, but indications are that the drug kept the soldiers awake for 48 hours and that they afterwards had little difficulty in getting to sleep. Only an additional three to four hours of sleep was needed to re-establish normal sleep patterns.



PATRIOT MISSILES

Crews claim cleaner kills

FROM ASSOCIATED PRESS IN SAUDI ARABIA

CREWS manning one Patriot missile battery are not satisfied with the hi-tech weapon's much-vaunted success. They think they have improved on it.

Lieutenant Colonel Thomas Smith, commander of the 3rd Battalion, 43rd Air Defense Artillery Regiment, said his men have been adjusting the system's computer software to get cleaner kills of Scud missiles fired at Saudi Arabia by Iraq. Their adjustments have apparently paid off.

On Friday, a Patriot destroyed a Scud over Riyadh, leaving only minor debris. In the past, debris from inter-

cepted Scuds has killed several people and injured dozens in Saudi Arabia and Israel.

Colonel Smith said the Patriots' engagement parameters - the altitude, range and angle of attack - are being altered to hit the Scud's warhead head-on. The men are able to refine their weapons thanks to the practical experience that they have gained in defending the skies of Saudi Arabia and Israel.

Patriots have engaged and destroyed 36 of the 59 Scuds that have been fired at the two countries. Most of the other missiles were allowed to hit unpopulated areas.

Before the war, the Patriot had only limited testing against American Lance missiles. "Firing the missile was not something that we got to practice much," said Major Peter Hayward, the battalion's operations officer. "Now that we're getting the data, there are little things that we can try to optimize the targeting."

● **JERUSALEM:** Iraq fired one Scud missile at Israel yesterday during the evening rush-hour, the army said (Reuters reports). There was no immediate information on any damage or casualties. (These reports are subject to military reporting restrictions)

DONATIONS TO THE GULF TRUST

The Secretary of State for Defence has set up the "Gulf Trust" to which members of the public may subscribe. Donations to this fund will be passed to the charitable Services Benevolent Fund (King George's Fund for Sailors, The Army Benevolent Fund and the RAF Benevolent Fund) and they will use the money to meet the needs of those Service personnel and dependants who have suffered as a result of the hostilities in the Gulf. If you would like to contribute to the Gulf Trust you can do so by filling in the coupon and attaching a cheque or Postal Order. PLEASE DO NOT SEND CASH. Alternatively you can make direct payments through any UK clearing bank, or telephone credit card donations (VISA/Access) on 0898 900026.

Calls charged at 33p/min (plus 14p/min at other times). The line will be answered by British Telecom who will make a donation to the Trust, the value of which will reflect the number of calls made.

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Britons are more European than their politicians

By JOHN YOUNG

BRITONS have a more positive attitude towards European union than is generally supposed, a survey published yesterday suggests. The findings indicate that Conservative and Labour politicians may have misjudged public opinion in calling for a cautious approach to greater unity.

In a poll carried out by Gallup for *Reader's Digest*, more than 22,000 people in 17 countries, including all 12 EC members, were questioned about their way of life and attitude to a range of issues. The result is said to be the most comprehensive study of European public opinion and lifestyles compiled in the past 20 years.

Perhaps the most disturbing finding was that the British education system was rated lower than in any other country in Europe. Only just over a third "had faith" in the system, compared with 77 per cent in Denmark, Switzerland and Finland.

Only 22 per cent have a degree or professional qualification, as against 58 per cent in Sweden and 55 per cent in France. Seven out of 10 Britons left school by the age of 17, along with Spain the highest figure in Europe. While 27 per cent of French people claim to know enough English to read and enjoy an English book or

ATTITUDES TO EUROPEAN UNION												
All adults Base (1000s)	239,632	W Ger 45,800	Ita 44,472	GB 42,720	Fr 40,275	Sp 28,755	Neth 11,326	Belg 7,696	Port 7,200	Gr 6,596	Den 4,389	Ir 2,238
Common foreign policy												
For	57	83	62	50	58	53	65	63	57	57	30	55
Against	19	16	9	31	24	10	18	13	10	12	57	16
Removing all border controls												
For	54	65	44	44	51	60	58	70	67	61	39	63
Against	29	20	33	43	36	10	32	16	13	9	56	20
Criminal police force												
For	55	65	50	50	58	45	68	59	54	50	49	58
Against	22	17	19	34	23	19	17	20	10	12	35	24
Common agricultural policy												
For	59	57	45	45	54	46	62	45	63	61	55	54
Against	24	29	57	37	26	11	25	27	4	11	35	20
Common currency												
For	59	49	70	49	68	60	67	69	50	58	37	84
Against	21	33	6	37	17	9	20	14	12	10	58	21
Help for Eastern Europe												
For	47	51	44	48	45	40	69	41	43	43	53	46
Against	28	29	28	35	37	15	21	32	14	19	38	28

Source: *Reader's Digest*

magazine, only 13 per cent of Britons claim an equivalent knowledge of French.

In Britain 73 per cent favour making the EC stronger to compete economically with North America and the Far East, a figure just above the Community average. There was also enthusiasm for removing customs duties within the Community (67 per cent), an end to employment barriers (71 per cent), diverting resources to poorer member states (65 per cent), pooling scientific research (79 per cent), and equalising social benefits (80 per cent). Half the respondents

favoured a European police force, an idea that has barely arisen.

Britain appeared notably less ready than other members to support a common currency (49 per cent), a common foreign policy (50 per cent), the continuance of the common agricultural policy (45 per cent) or the removal of border controls (44 per cent). Reservations about a single currency were shared by Germany and Denmark.

Even before the outbreak of the Gulf war Britons were shown to have the highest confidence of any country in their armed forces (82 per cent). They were also

above average in their respect for the police (73 per cent) and for the legal system (48 per cent).

Confidence in most other institutions is lower than in other countries, notably the civil service (38 per cent), parliament (35 per cent), local government (34 per cent) and trade unions (31 per cent). Bottom of the list by a long way comes the press, in which only 14 per cent expressed confidence, compared with a European average of 38 per cent.

The British are evidently not as lazy as they are frequently depicted. Four out of five thought work was essential for a full life

and only 41 per cent thought that in the next 10 years most people would have more leisure time than more money. Eighteen per cent of principal wage-earners work more than 50 hours a week, compared with only 8 per cent in Germany and Denmark. Germans, generally supposed to be the most hard-working nation in Europe, rated work less highly than any other country (63 per cent) and among those who gave it top marks were the Irish and the Portuguese.

Only 11 per cent of Germans thought they were living comfortably, although 62 per cent consid-

ered they were "coping". The most contented were the Swiss (63 per cent), the Dutch (59 per cent) and the Swedes (55 per cent). Three out of four Britons admitted to living comfortably or coping, and only 8 per cent found life very difficult.

Questioned on family life, 28 per cent of Britons thought marriage without children was not complete, 79 per cent thought women should be free "to do what they want" and 69 per cent believed they should have the right to choose to have abortions.

Those figures were markedly out of line with most of the rest of Europe, although the Scandinavian countries were generally in agreement on the "liberation" and abortion issues. Religion also rated poorly: 60 per cent of Europeans agreed it was a force in society but only 45 per cent of Britons expressed confidence in the church, and only a third made a Christmas visit.

In Britain 67 per cent own their homes (EC average 59 per cent) and more than four out of five live in houses as opposed to apartments. Four out of five have bank accounts, slightly more than the European average, two out of three are car owners and three out of five had travelled on holiday within the previous year.

Major in Germany, page 1
Leading article, page 11

Suspended jail term on drink-drive motorist is condemned

A MOTORIST who was found to be six times over the alcohol limit while awaiting trial for being four-and-a-half times over was given a suspended jail sentence yesterday.

The sentence on Terence Young, aged 44, was immediately criticised as "too lenient" by the Campaign Against Drink Driving. Young, a shopfloor supervisor, from Tamworth, Staffordshire, admitted driving with excess alcohol twice in four months, and driving without due care.

The first drink-drive offence happened last September when Young drove on to a neighbour's lawn and hit a side sign, Sidney Gray, for the prosecution, told magistrates at Tamworth.

Then, in January, Young drove into two stationary vehicles. He hit one car twice, colliding with it and then reversing back into it, the court was told. The initial breath test reading had been more than six times the legal limit. A second reading, used for the prosecution, had been five and a half times the limit.

Young was banned from driving for three years and given a six-month jail sentence suspended for two years. He was also fined £400.

David Foster, for Young, said that he had been depressed after the breakdown of his marriage. He was trying to have treatment for his drink problem.

Graham Buxton, leader of the Campaign Against Drink Driving, said: "Too often, the magistrates get it wrong, instead of considering the safety of the public they tend to look at the defendant's circumstances."

A doctor on stand-by for duty in the Gulf escaped jail yesterday after crashing his car while more than three times over the drink-drive limit. John Halloran, aged 46, of Morley, near Leeds, a major in the Territorial Army medical corps, admitted driving with excess alcohol, failing to stop after an accident and failing to report an accident last October. Morley magistrates banned him from driving for three years and fined him £1,300.

Four-year degree plan

The prime minister's science advisers are to relaunch an initiative to improve standards in higher education by making four-year degrees the norm in engineering and the physical sciences (John O'Leary writes).

Scientists in several subjects have been seeking longer courses as the volume of work covered on three-year degrees has grown. The Advisory Council on Science and Technology drew up proposals for a four-year system throughout engineering and the physical sciences last year, but discussions were called off because of the Conservative party leadership contest.

A Cabinet Office official said yesterday that a report was being prepared for publication within two months. Under the proposals, standard degrees in the physical sciences and engineering in England and Wales would switch to a "three plus one" structure.

Manslaughter plea

A Northern Ireland Railways' train driver will be sentenced at Antrim crown court today after pleading guilty to manslaughter for his part in a collision with a car at an unmanned level crossing near Ballymena, Co Antrim, last year in which three people died. Neville Francis McCorkill, aged 32, of Londonderry, changed his plea to guilty when he appeared in court yesterday.

Radio jobs lost

Jazz FM, London's commercial jazz and blues station, yesterday made redundant a third of its staff after a drop in ratings and decline in revenue. Sixteen administrative and advertising staff will go. Jazz FM, which began almost a year ago, said its audience had dropped from 800,000 to 500,000 since autumn as people switched to speech-based stations because of the leadership battle and Gulf war.

Strangeways death

Mark Tyler, aged 22, a remand prisoner facing burglary charges, was yesterday found hanged from the bars of his cell in the refurbished K-wing at Strangeways prison in Manchester two months after the jail was reopened. Prisoners claim that conditions in K-wing are still unsatisfactory because of the sloping-out system and restrictions on visits to 20 minutes a day.

Murder enquiries

Robert Black, aged 43, a London van driver sentenced to life in Scotland for assaulting a girl aged six, is expected to be questioned today about the killings of three other girls. Black, who was moved to Durham jail from Soughton prison in Edinburgh, is to be interviewed about the abductions and murders of Caroline Hogg, aged five, Susan Maxwell, eleven, and Sarah Harper, ten.

Precedent forces appeal judges to free child death couple

By ROBIN YOUNG

A COUPLE jailed for 12 years in 1988 for killing their baby daughter have been freed by the Court of Appeal on the ground that the evidence against them did not indicate which parent had inflicted the fatal injuries.

Roy Aston and Christine Mason, of Walworth, south London, had served two-year sentences for cruelty to their child, Doreen, aged 16 months, and so were released immediately.

The Lord Chief Justice, Lord Lane, sitting on Friday with Mr Justice Henry and Mr Justice Pill, said that the court had been "forced to the unwelcome conclusion" that there was nothing in the evidence to indicate which had been responsible for the death.

The decision was based on legal precedent relating to people jointly charged. In the 1950s, the then Lord Chief Justice, Lord Goddard, held that when evidence did not point to one rather than

which, if not both of them, inflicted the relevant fatal injuries.

He concluded that Mr Aston, as "principal actor", and Miss Mason, as aider and abettor, had a case to answer. He said that Mr Aston's evidence that he heard no screams or cries while Doreen was alone with her mother meant that it might reasonably be inferred that Doreen had been injured while she was alone with him.

Lord Lane said that inference was based on a misapprehension of evidence given by a pathologist, who had said that the child could have been unconscious for a time before becoming lucid again, then lapsing into unconsciousness and dying. Both defendants had had the opportunity to kill her.

At the 1988 trial, the couple blamed each other. The jury cleared them of murder, but convicted them of manslaughter by a majority verdict.

Mr Justice Turner told Miss Mason and Mr Aston that their cruelty to the baby had "assumed quite horrifying, shocking and almost unbelievable proportions".

Doreen had been on Southwark council's register of children at risk from the age of 18 days. A social worker had repeatedly been refused access and it was decided to write demanding this. Doreen was dead before the letter was posted.

Southwark council said yesterday that many lessons had been learnt from the death. The borough has one of the highest numbers of child-protection cases.



Aston and Mason: blamed each other at 1988 trial

the other, or indicate that they were acting in concert, verdicts of not guilty should be returned.

Aston, aged 26, and Mason, aged 24, who were jailed by Mr Justice Turner at the Central Criminal Court in December 1988, had their convictions for manslaughter quashed and the sentences set aside.

Lord Lane said that Doreen died in hospital from brain haemorrhage 24 hours after admission. She had been on Southwark social service department's "at risk" register. Her injuries led doctors to believe that she had been dropped head first on a table or slammed against a hard surface.

The couple were charged with murder. The prosecution's case was that Aston inflicted the fatal injuries and that Mason encouraged him and shared his guilt, although it was possible that their roles had been reversed. The judge, dismissing a plea that there was no case to answer, had said: "There is no doubt that there is no direct evidence, whether by way of eye witness or by direct admission by either of the two accused, as to

Renewed pressure for child tax allowances

THE government came under renewed pressure yesterday to review child benefit by introducing a system of child tax allowances (Jill Sherman writes).

The Institute of Economic Affairs said that the existing cash benefit system should be retained for mothers who did not pay tax but tax payers should be able to claim the benefit as a tax allowance.

Under its proposals, published in a report yesterday, child benefit at £7.25 per week could be claimed as a child tax allowance of £1,508, while child benefit for the first child at £8.25 would be worth an allowance of £1,716.

The child tax allowance would

be available to the mother in the first instance, under the same rules as at present for child benefit, but like the present married couple's allowance would be transferable between spouses, Barry Bracewell-Milnes, the report's author, said. "Take-up would be voluntary. Those who wished to stay with the present system would be able to do so," he added.

A second report, published yesterday by the London School of Economics, calls instead for substantial increases in child benefit financed by increasing the basic rate of income tax or restricting income tax allowances and reliefs to the basic rate of income tax.

BR sets itself target of nil accident rate

By MICHAEL DYNES, TRANSPORT CORRESPONDENT

BRITISH Rail has set itself the target of a nil accident rate on the national rail network, according to the long-awaited railway safety plan published yesterday.

A summary of the plan, bringing together all the railway safety initiatives being pursued by British Rail, will be issued to all staff and will be made available to rail users on request, British Rail said.

Defending the rail network's safety record, Sir Bob Reid, the British Rail chairman, said: "Our safety record compares favourably with that of other railways throughout the world. The chance of being involved in an accident is

significantly lower than the accident rate in the home."

Sir Bob said that while the network's safety record remained good, British Rail was committed to further improvement. About £70 million was being spent on railway safety improvements in the present financial year, with plans to spend an extra £330 million over the next three years, he said.

The main safety projects included spending on automatic protection to prevent trains passing red signals, the installation of black box data recorders, and the introduction of radio communications in all driver-only trains.

Other safety initiatives include a £5 million programme to improve safety at level crossings, research into improving the crash resistance of trains, and a whole-sale reduction in opportunities for trespass and vandalism.

Sir Bob said that the safety of passengers had improved markedly over the past 20 years, giving British Rail a better safety record than most of its European counterparts. However, "people expect higher standards from British Rail than when they are responsible for their own safety—a challenge that British Rail readily accepts," he said.

The Railway Inspectorate will open its enquiry into last month's rail crash at Cannon Street in London in which two people died on February 25, the Health and Safety Executive announced yesterday.

Council to call time on stirrup cup

By KERRY GILL

FEW could deny foxhunters a stiff whisky before riding to hounds in the bitter weather, except, perhaps, when the hunt is imbibing at the expense of poll tax payers.

Annandale and Eskdale district council is believed to be the only authority in Scotland still generous enough to offer a free stirrup cup to hunters, a tradition that has increased the controlling Liberal Democrat group. Frank Park, the council chairman, is to ask his colleagues to end the tradition and ban hunts from public land.

Councillors opposed to blood sports have boycotted the ceremonies and left their officials to dispense "wee drams" from Mr Park's hospitality cupboard. Mr Park said hard-pressed poll tax payers should not be forced to subsidise people taking part in the hunts at Lockerbie and Annan.

Sarah Birkbeck, joint master of the Dumfriesshire Hunt, said: "It would be a shame for the hospitality to be withdrawn. We provide the town people with a colourful country spectacle, which has tourist value. A lot of socialist council up and down the country have made life difficult for us."

William Games, the council secretary, said the custom was inherited from the old Lockerbie and Annan town councils and the cost could not be quantified. The reason, it appears, is that Mr Park's cocktail cabinet is only restocked when necessary. Nobody, Mr Games said, would be so niggardly as to mark the bottles.

Salad bars condemned as paradise for bacteria

By BILL FROST

MANY salad bars in and around London are a paradise for bacteria, according to the Consumers' Association magazine *Which?* *Health*, published today. Investigators came across examples of faecal contamination in food and at one establishment, which the magazine would not identify, an environmental health officer found a dead bluebottle in his salad.

Two salads, one from Garfunkels and the other from Pizza Hut, had high levels of *E. coli* bacteria, suggesting faecal contamination from staff or customers who had not washed their hands after going to the lavatory. Paul Garrard,

health and food safety manager for Garfunkels, said yesterday that the presence of bacteria in the salad was a one-off.

"The sample taken was not representative. We take many samples ourselves and only very, very rarely discover evidence of contamination, usually associated with grated carrots," Mr Garrard said. Pizza Hut said last night that the company viewed the report with seriousness and was re-examining procedures for the washing of fresh vegetables.

According to *Which?* *Health*, high numbers of bacteria were found in 31 out of 36 takeaway salads bought from six restaurant chains with self-service bars in and around London. Food

was shown to be at risk from avoidable contamination in each of six salad bars checked by an environmental health officer.

The magazine found that salads were frequently left out while cleaners vacuumed the floor, exposing the food to dust. The handles of serving spoons were often inside the bowl, so that customers had to put their fingers into the food to pick it up—a prime source of contamination. Better standards of hygiene and an approved code of practice for salad bars were needed, the magazine said.

On choice, the investigators said that the range of salads offered at most restaurants was disappointing. Vegetarians were

warned that several mixed salads examined contained pieces of meat that were difficult to see.

A survey conducted for the magazine finds there is support for more tobacco smoke-free areas in public places. More than half of those questioned were in favour of legislation banning smoking in public buildings and on public transport. Nearly two-thirds thought there should be more no-smoking areas in restaurants.

"The results of the survey show there is a demand for more smoke-free areas, and the government should give firm backing for the right of non-smokers to breathe smoke-free air in public buildings and on public transport," the Consumers' Association said.

Roads blocked and trains halted



Fire extinguished: Bethanie Bourne, aged nine, admiring a 16ft snow dragon which appeared on Newham Common, Cambridge, yesterday

Black ice alert as the big freeze goes on

By RAY CLANCY

SEVERE overnight frosts are expected to keep Britain snow-bound until the end of the week, the weather office predicted last night, as it warned people not to be fooled by higher day-time temperatures. Black ice is making roads treacherous and commuters all over the country are likely to face delays for several days yet, British Rail said it was confident it could run a reduced timetable but a full service was unlikely because one third of its rolling stock is out of order due to damage caused by the weather. Commuters who were delayed for hours at stations said yesterday they found it difficult to understand why so many trains were out of order. British Rail said sliding doors were frozen shut, engines were burnt out through short-circuiting and there were electrical faults. Although engineers have been working round the clock to repair the damage, a spokesman said he could not say when things would be back to normal. Temperatures were a few degrees above freezing yesterday for the first time in almost a week but forecasters said the snow would not disappear overnight because temperatures would drop rapidly to -6C after dark. "Although it is slightly warmer during the day there is no immediate thaw in sight. Widespread frost is forecast across the country, including London and other cities. People should not be fooled by melting icicles," London weather centre said. Snow showers are also expected in Kent, East Anglia, Wales and on high ground and steep slopes for the Southwest, Northern Ireland and Scotland. Three climbers were rescued in the Scottish mountains last night and a woman was found safe and well after spending the night in a rescue hut. The climbers, who have not been named, were caught



Helen Fokremann putting the finishing touches to her snowman in Brixton, south London



Stephanie and Greg Anderson close to completion on a more traditional snowman in Burnley, Lancashire

Councils hit by cost of clearing highways

POLL-TAX capping has left many local authorities with insufficient money to pay for road gritting and clearing, it was claimed yesterday (Ray Clancy writes). David Blunkett, Labour local government spokesman, called last night for extra payments to hard-hit councils and said that he would ask Michael Heseltine, the environment secretary, for help. The heavy snow has left the metropolitan borough of Calderdale, West Yorkshire, with no money in its road-clearing fund. The council will meet this week to decide whether it should stop gritting or take money from education and social services budgets to meet the cost of keeping roads clear. Other councils, which have spent an average of £4,000 a day keeping roads clear, say that they might have to use reserves if the harsh weather continues. Mr Blunkett wants the government to invoke the Bellwin rules, which allow for grants to councils in financial trouble because of a disaster or bad weather. Grants were made during the storms of 1987, 1989 and 1990. "Ministers ought to consider the problem of identifying these authorities. It's not good enough to charge-cap authorities and then expect them to budget for all eventualities," he said. The environment department offered some slight hope of help for councils last night. "Local authorities should have budgeted to cover the cost of snow clearance. It's up to them to approach us if they feel they have spent an excessive amount; each case is examined on its merits," he said. The government yesterday rejected pressure to pay council weather benefits to poor people automatically. Nicholas Scott, social security minister, also said that the benefits would depend on temperatures remaining below freezing for seven consecutive days, a rule that was waived temporarily last week. The increase from £5 to £6 a week, however, was permanent.

Farmers 'must win over consumer confidence'

By MICHAEL HORNSBY, AGRICULTURE CORRESPONDENT

FARMERS must broaden their appeal to embrace the interests of consumers and environmentalists if they are to regain the confidence of the public, Sir Simon Gourlay, outgoing president of the National Farmers' Union, said yesterday. Sir Simon, who became president five years ago, will take his leave at the union's two-day annual general meeting which opens in London today. Careful stage-managing will ensure that the presidency will pass to Sir Simon's deputy, David Naish, an arable and livestock farmer from Buxton in Nottinghamshire. "It is only since the salmonella scare two years ago that we have realised how important good relations with consumers are. It is really only in the last year that we have recognised the importance of working together with environmentalists," Sir Simon said. "Farmers have to pay more attention to what happens beyond the farmgate." In one of his last acts as president, Sir Simon joined forces at the end of last week with David Astor, chairman of the Council for the Protection of Rural England, to oppose proposals for reform of the EC's common agricultural policy, which they said would seriously harm the countryside. In a letter to Michael Heseltine, the environment secretary, they said that the proposals by Raymond MacSharry, the EC agriculture commissioner, would have "a severe negative impact on the rural environment". In an effort to cut the cost of storing and disposing of mounting food surpluses, Mr MacSharry proposed earlier this month that subsidies, which guarantee farmers a minimum return well above what they would receive in a free market, should be reduced. To compensate farmers, direct grants would be introduced, aimed at the smallest farms. Sir Simon said yesterday that such an approach would penalise Britain, which has more large farms than other member states. There was nothing intrinsically more environmentally friendly about small farms. One of the more controversial legacies Sir Simon will bequeath to his successor is his advocacy of "supply management": compulsory EC-wide limits on farm inputs, such as fertiliser, amount of land under crops, and number of livestock per acre, coupled with maintenance of price support, albeit at a lower level, and continued protection against cheap imports from outside the Community. Farmers still have far to go to persuade the public that they care about the countryside, according to opinion surveys conducted by Mori and Reed Business Research for *Farmers Weekly*. While nearly three-quarters of farmers think that they benefit the environment, only one in five members of the public share that view. *Farmers and CAP, page 10*

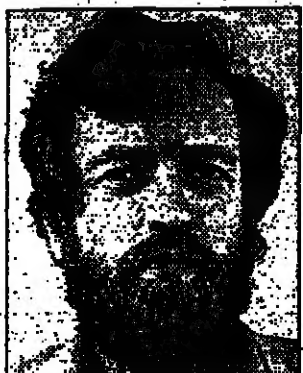
Irish fears over illegal use of beef hormone

CONCERN is growing in Ireland over the illegal use of drugs to boost lean-meat growth in cattle since the suspension without pay of an Irish agriculture department official on suspicion of involvement in drug smuggling (Michael Hornsby writes). The official, an agricultural officer in Co Meath, was held for questioning after customs officials said they had broken a big animal hormone smuggling and distribution ring and seized £100,000 worth of the drugs, known as "angel dust". The scandal is causing alarm because of the central role of the beef industry in the economy. Angel dust refers to a family of hormone drugs known as beta agonists, the most common of which is clenbuterol. In small doses this can be used legally to treat animal respiratory ailments. In illegal doses it converts fat to lean meat. Veterinary sources say that up to half of beef exports may be from illegally dosed animals. More than a dozen farmers are facing prosecution.

Labour MP in court for non-payment of poll tax

By DAVID YOUNG

JEREMY Corbyn, Labour MP for Islington North, yesterday vowed to continue to oppose the poll tax after he appeared in court for refusing to pay the £481 community charge set by Islington council in north London. The case was adjourned until April 10 after Mr Corbyn stated that his reasons for not paying were not financial. He was among 80 people who appeared before Highbury Corner magistrates for not paying the poll tax. They included an Islington Labour councillor. Mr Corbyn, of Tollington Park, Finsbury Park, said afterwards that he planned to fight the case "all the way down the line". "I am opposed to the poll tax. I am here today because thousands of people who have elected me just cannot afford to pay. I have seen their outgoings and what they earn and I know they haven't enough. I am here to give support to them — to show solidarity," he said. He refused to say whether he was prepared to go to jail



Corbyn: to fight case "all the way down the line"

rather than pay up. Mr Corbyn said that he was worse off with the poll tax. "The set figure of £481 is one of the highest in the country. I am not blaming the council for this; they are just one of many inner-city areas that have been treated abominably by central government." Mr Corbyn is one of 30 Labour MPs who said when the tax was introduced that they would not pay, a move that embarrassed the party leadership. Most of the 30 remain opposed to the tax and in spite of criticism by the prime minister and the embarrassment to the party leadership, 18 left-wing MPs have said that they will not pay. Dave Nellist, Coventry South East, and Ken Livingstone, Brent East, have already appeared in court for non-payment. Others who supported the big demonstration in London organized by the All Britain Anti-Poll Tax Federation intend to pay. Young people are suffering because the poll tax has forced cuts in local arts budgets, according to a report by the National Campaign for the Arts (Simon Tait writes). Theatres are sacrificing children's performances and youth theatres are closing, in schools peripatetic music teachers are being made redundant and public libraries are closing children's sections, reducing opening hours and curtailing book buying, according to the report by Susan Bruce, the campaign's research officer.

Fixing case dropped

A retired builder arrested after an alleged approach to Gerald Ronson, the Heron Group chief, to fix the jury for a £30 million pay-off during last year's Guinness trial, has had the case against him dropped by the Crown Prosecution Service. Magistrates at Horseferry Road court, London, were told yesterday that the case against Thomas Lucas, aged 73, of Castlebar, Co Mayo, had been dropped on compassionate grounds, although it has not been announced whether it relates to Lucas's ill-health or lack of evidence.

Swindle pair

Two men were convicted in a Belfast court yesterday of defrauding a woman aged 101 of almost £5,000 for repairs to her home which were never carried out. David Boyd and Steven Burns, both of Dundonald, Co Down, were each given two-year suspended sentences and ordered to pay more than £2,000 damages.

Rape charge

Devin Brown, aged 26, a prison officer of Feltham, east London, appeared before Bournemouth magistrates yesterday accused of raping two women in the town.

Pollution fear

The National Rivers Authority is investigating a possible chemical spillage into the river Cuckmere, Devon, at the weekend, which they fear could damage fish spawning grounds.

Jail protest

Two convicts were sentenced to a further nine months' jail yesterday after causing more than £23,000 damage at Stafford prison, Staffordshire, during a rooftop demonstration last April. Stafford crown court passed sentences on David Axten, aged 23, and Michael Rowley, aged 22.

Rubbish study

Dr Irene Watson-Craig, of Strathclyde university, has been awarded nearly £200,000 to study the effects of pollution at rubbish tips.

Baby death

Nicholas Thompson, aged seven weeks, died yesterday in a blaze at his home in Hailsham, East Sussex.

Deer case too

A herd of wild deer is being included in the price of a £480,000 home near Tavistock, Devon.

B&Q Price

£37.95

Gainsborough Style 100 7kW Instant Electric Shower

Fully temperature stabilised with numerical temperature indicator. Was £59.95



OPEN 9AM TO 5PM Mon to Sat. Our Scottish stores are also open Sun 9am to 6pm. FREE DELIVERY anywhere in mainland UK. Northern Ireland, Isle of Wight, Isle of Man, Jersey and Guernsey. FOR YOUR NEAREST STORE Ring 084-200 0200. Offer is subject to availability. Please phone to check before travelling. Size shown is approximate. Prices include V.A.T. Prices may vary in Northern Ireland and B&Q DEPOT.

AN APPEAL TO BRITISH INDUSTRY ON BEHALF OF THE BRITISH TROOPS IN THE GULF

I have been considering how we in British industry can help our Forces in the Gulf at this difficult time. One way is to help them keep in touch with home. A phone call can really boost morale. We can give our troops the means to make that call.

That is why Cable & Wireless' subsidiary, Mercury, has recently sent forty payphones for British Forces to use at bases in Saudi Arabia. Mercury are rushing a further 46 payphones to the Gulf. It will operate them on a non-profit basis.

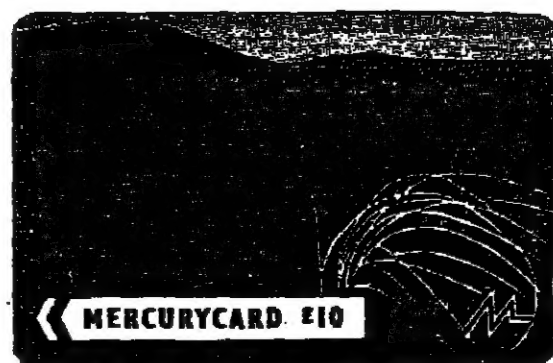
British Aerospace, National Westminster Bank and Cable & Wireless have joined together to contribute £1 million to purchase 100,000 Mercurycards for the Ministry of Defence to distribute to British personnel in the Gulf.

I want to take the initiative a step further, which is why I am now appealing for other British companies to join us in providing this help for our troops. A minimum contribution of £10,000 will buy 1,000 cards. Each card will pay for two or three short calls or for an eight-minute call home.

If you want to contribute, please telephone 0800 300 777 for further information. If your company wishes its name to appear on the cards, this can be arranged. We are making arrangements with Forces charities for gifts to be treated as charitable donations. When the crisis is over, any surplus funds will be donated to the Gulf Trust.

I hope you will join us to help maintain the important link between British Forces and their families.

LORD YOUNG OF GRAFFHAM



FOR FURTHER INFORMATION TELEPHONE 0800 300 777

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Patten tries to damp down talk of early election

By RICHARD FORD, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

CHRIS Patten tried to damp down speculation about an early general election yesterday as senior Conservative MPs spoke of the danger of going to the polls with the economy in recession.

Although a survey in *The Times* showed that unemployment had risen five times as quickly in Tory-held constituencies as in Labour seats, few Conservative MPs said they yet face serious political pressure over job losses. However,

anxiety about the effects of high interest rates, particularly in the Conservative heartlands, is expected to emerge tomorrow when the Commons debates the autumn statement. Yesterday, Mr Patten, chairman of the Conservative party, said that there would be difficulties in the months ahead, but added that figures would show considerable success in the fight against inflation.

He said that economic factors would be the key to the timing of the next general election and pledged: "I know that the thing we will take account of above all is what is in the interests of the economy and what the people think to be right."

The Labour leadership suspects that John Major will go for an early election to reap the rewards from his popularity in the opinion polls and because the longer-term economic prospects are poor.

Tony Blair, shadow employment secretary, said: "I really cannot second guess what the Conservatives are likely to do. They have got considerable difficulties. No one is going to believe if they go for an early election that it is for any reason other than that they are afraid to tell people the truth about the economy."

Mr Blair said that unemployment was no longer just a matter of people feeling compassion for others but was causing people to fear for their own jobs. The recession was not just hitting southern service industries or white-collar workers but was affecting the North which had very high unemployment in the early Eighties.

Despite increasing unemployment in Conservative-held constituencies, Tory MPs pointed out yesterday that the increase was from a low base and that overall the levels remained much lower than a decade ago. Robert Rhodes James, writing in *Conservative MP* for Cambridge, said that so far the city had escaped the worst of the recession because it had a diversified industrial base. However, he said some of his parliamentary colleagues were worrying because they had never experienced rising unemployment.

"Some MPs sitting on large majorities have never known anything like this rise in unemployment, but I put it in perspective because when I won Cambridge in 1976 unemployment was at 12 per cent."

Even Cambridge was no longer immune, he agreed. "The icy winds are beginning to blow around us," Mr Rhodes James favoured in a cut in interest rates, but said that ministers should do nothing until they were certain that the trend would be downward. "The worst thing possible would be for interest rates to be cut too early and then for them to go up and down."

A senior backbencher with a safe seat in the Home Counties said that for the first time accountants and other professional people in his constituency were being made redundant. "They will get other jobs, but what they are finding is that there is no longer much choice for them," he said. "The real problem is that many of my constituents paid a lot of money for rather small houses and are really pretty strapped for cash."

David Ames, Conservative MP for Basildon, compared the position in his constituency today with what it was like in the early Eighties. "When I came over 10,000 people were out of work. Now it is about 2,000... I do not think there will be a political backlash."



Demand for audit changes rejected

The trade and industry department has rejected a proposal to require companies to appoint new auditors at least every five years.

John Redwood, minister for corporate affairs, said in a written reply to Jim Cousins, Labour MP for Newcastle upon Tyne Central, that response to recent consultations had been overwhelmingly against requiring companies to change auditors at regular intervals, on the ground that it would increase costs and make audits less effective.

Reform for transport

Management of London Underground, British Rail and London Buses, must be reformed, reorganised and strengthened, Roger Freeman, public transport minister, told MPs at a question time. That was necessary so that they could get the most out of its "generous increase" in resources, he said.

Tobacco aid is to end

The government is to stop aid for the tobacco industries in developing countries, Lynda Chalker, the overseas aid minister, said in a Commons written reply. She said that, although tobacco was an important crop for many developing countries, with the increasing evidence of the dangers to health smoking in poor countries was likely to increase the burden on their already inadequate health budgets. Help will be given to tobacco growers to diversify into other crops. The policy will apply to Eastern Europe.

M40 services

Until service areas are opened on the newly completed M40, temporary signs are to be erected indicating 24-hour fuel and refreshment facilities near junctions. Christopher Chope, roads and traffic minister, said in a written reply. Three service areas are planned for the motorway, with the first expected to open before the end of next year.

Traffic cuts

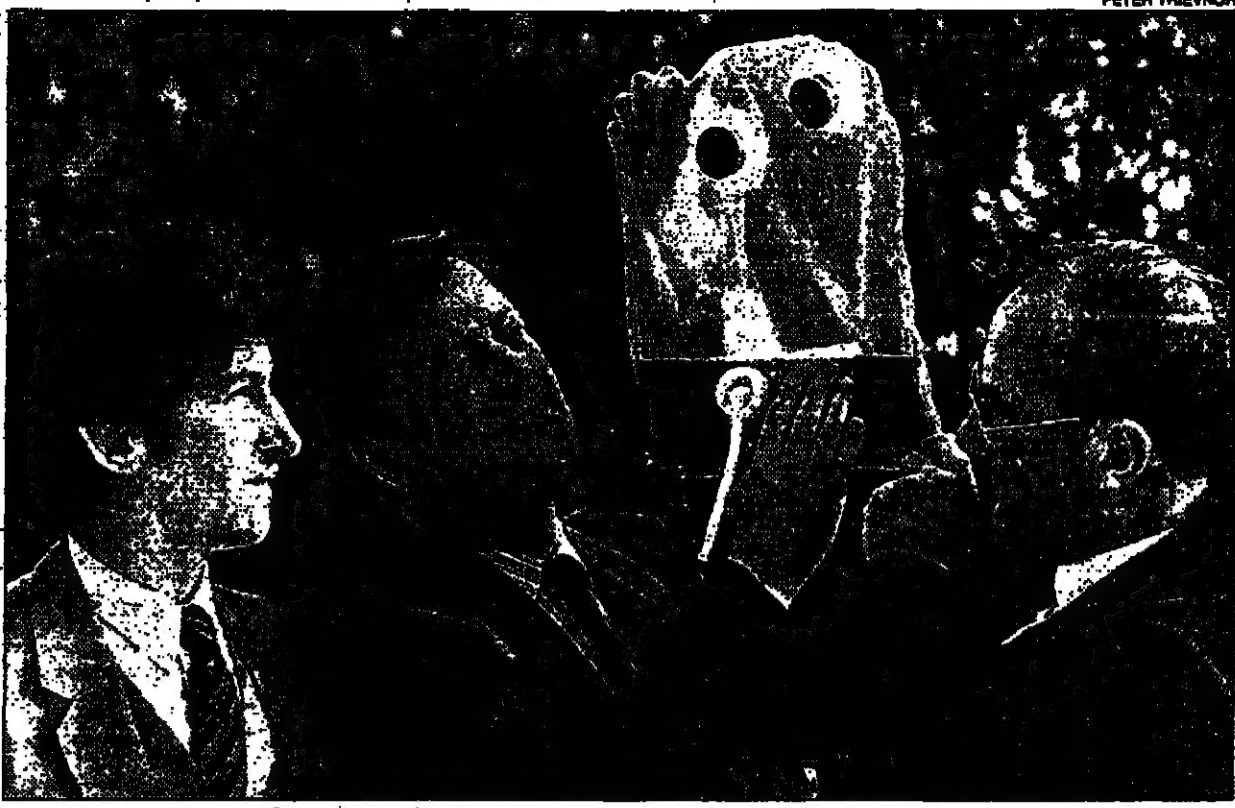
Initial traffic counts show that traffic on the M1 has been reduced by up to 11,000 vehicles a week since the M40 was completed last month, Christopher Chope, roads and traffic minister, said in a written reply.

More police

The strength of the Metropolitan Police has gone up by more than 6,000 officers to over 28,000 since the government came to office nearly 12 years ago, Peter Lloyd, a Home Office minister, said in the Commons.

Parliament today

Commons (2.30): Questions: Education and Science; prime minister. British Technology Group bill, second reading. Lords (2.30): Debate on the economy.



Life-saver Kenneth Clarke, education secretary (centre), examining an oral rehydration system invented by Dr Michael Wilson (left) and Dr Philip Monro. Their device, which cleans contaminated water and could save many lives in the Third World, won them top prize in the Toshiba Year of Invention awards yesterday

Labour attacks fuel imports

By OUR CHIEF POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

RESOURCES

FIGURES showing that Britain is a net importer of fuel for the second year in succession were labelled a national disgrace by the Labour leadership yesterday.

Frank Dobson, the shadow energy secretary, denounced the government for allowing a nation that was self-sufficient in fuel to import more than is being exported.

He told a press conference at Westminster that the one-off benefit of North Sea oil and gas had been frittered away by a government that was failing to invest in home production, energy efficiency or energy conservation. He said: "For the second year running, more fuel was imported into Britain than was exported. Britain's fuel trade is in the red again."

Mr Dobson said that as recently as 1987 Britain had a favourable fuel trade balance of 54 million tonnes. "This has now been turned into a deficit of 11.5 million tonnes - doubling the deficit for 1989. In value, the deficit totals £39 million compared



Dobson: North Sea oil benefit "frittered away"

with a surplus of £6,132 million in 1985." The value of Britain's fuel exports had more than halved from £16,796 million in 1985 to just £7,801 million last year.

Mr Dobson said: "These figures are a national disgrace. They show that the Tories are a collection of economic incompetents. They have had all the benefits of North Sea oil and gas, and of Western Europe's largest deep-sea coal industry, but this year we are almost certain to be overtaken by Germany. 'So we end up actually importing fuel. They have allowed natural gas to be flared-off and wasted; they have run down the British coal industry and encouraged coal imports."

"Their mismanagement of North Sea safety combined with their encouragement of the generating companies to burn more oil has led to the highest oil imports since the Seventies."

Teachers and police officers face redundancy, survey says

By DOUGLAS BROOM, LOCAL GOVERNMENT CORRESPONDENT

COUNCIL CUTS

HUNDREDS of teachers, social workers, police officers and fire fighters face redundancy in April as councils struggle to avoid poll tax capping, according to a Labour party survey published yesterday.

A study of 27 councils, five police and one fire authority found that between them they were contemplating cuts totalling £363.74 million simply to stay within government spending limits.

David Blunkett, Labour's local government spokesman, said that the survey, the first national study of the impact of new capping rules that came into force on April 1, showed that education and social services would bear the brunt.

Under the new system, councils will be capped if they increase spending by more than 9 per cent above their budget for this financial year or 12.5 per cent above their government-set standard spending assessment.

The position has been complicated because, although spending assessments have in general gone up by more than the rate of inflation, some high spending councils have been set targets for next year that are lower than their present budgets.

The Labour party survey found that spending on education and social services was the most likely to be cut because they accounted for the largest share of council spending.

As well as cuts in the number of teachers and social workers, councils were also planning to increase charges for home help and meals on wheels and to phase out school meals altogether.

Mr Blunkett said: "This survey confirms our worst fears, that the poll tax in 1991 will mean higher household bills and damaging cuts in essential services, truly the worst of both worlds."

The combination of an inadequate grant settlement and the new capping rules is threatening the very fabric of services in many areas."

Mr Blunkett said that Labour would see to it that the Conservatives were "made to

COUNCIL CUTS

pay the political price for the damage the poll tax is imposing on individuals and communities."

The survey found that in Avon, where no party has control, £28 million would have to be cut, including £8 million from education and the closure of four homes for the elderly, to avoid capping.

Labour-controlled Basildon would have to cut its budget by a third to avoid capping, a task that many councillors regard as impossible, prompting speculation that it may be capped.

In Conservative-controlled Berkshire, cuts of £7.5 million would be needed to avoid capping and Tory-controlled Bournemouth would have to cut £2.9 million for the same reason.

Labour-controlled Bristol reported that it needed to make cuts totalling £21 million, a third of its budget, to avoid being capped for the second successive year.

Labour Derbyshire would shed 5,000 jobs in an effort to cut £41 million and Tory Ealing was planning to cut £10 million to keep its poll tax down. Labour Greenwich was faced with a £38.77 million cut to avoid capping.

Hillingdon, won by the Tories last May, was cutting £23 million, including scrapping school meals and closing four schools while neighbouring Labour-run Hounslow was planning to take £12 million from reserves to offset a £17 million cut to avoid capping.

Kent's Conservative county council was making £9 million worth of education cuts and Langbaurgh on Tees district council had to cut £4.5 million to avoid becoming the first Tory council to be capped.

Among police authorities, Manchester was cutting £5 million, losing 200 police officers and 150 non-police staff to avoid capping and Merseyside was cutting £7.3 million. Northumbria police authority would cut £6.4 million, losing 300 officers and South Yorkshire planned to cut £4.5 million and 220

officers. The West Midlands force would shed 100 officers in cuts of £14.7 million needed to avoid capping.

South Yorkshire fire and civil defence authority, the only metropolitan fire authority surveyed, said that it planned to cut £2.8 million to avoid being capped. Fire prevention work would be stopped as a result.

Mr Field had made plain in

Field expected to stand in new poll contest

By PHILIP WEBSTER, CHIEF POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

RESELECTION

FRANK Field is expected to be a candidate in the new reselection contest at Birkenhead on Merseyside that Labour leaders are to approve later this month.

His supporters are hoping that the continuing leadership investigation into far-left infiltration will result in alleged sympathisers with the far-left Socialist Organiser being thrown off the panel of candidates for May's local elections.

The ruling national executive committee sets a timetable in two weeks' time for the re-run of the earlier contest in which Paul Davies, a trade union official, defeated Mr Field.

Supporters of Mr Field voiced confidence yesterday that the actions taken against the local party would mean that the MP could overturn his earlier defeat by encouraging more of his supporters to vote and highlighting the behaviour of constituency officials opposed to him.

According to his backers, more than 100 party members did not vote in the contest in December, 1989, and the arithmetic of the earlier vote has been altered by the decision of the NEC to send nine members of the constituency to the national constitutional committee for alleged membership of the Militant Tendency.

Mr Field had made plain in

December that he would take no part in a contest provisionally arranged by the local party executive and Labour north-west regional officials. That would have ended in March. But his complaint that earlier recommendations of the NEC had not been implemented led to a fresh enquiry into the Birkenhead party that has delayed the new contest.

Mr Field's opponents believe that the MP, with the tacit assistance of the NEC, has been delaying the new contest to enable him to be automatically imposed on the constituency as soon as a general election is called.

His supporters, however, believe that imposition would be an unsatisfactory outcome and that it is important for Mr Field to be seen to beat off a challenge that has been supported by extremist elements.

They have welcomed the decision of the NEC to re-nominate local party officers over the letter they distributed criticising party members who had helped the national enquiry into Militant, and to suspend nine members of the party pending investigation into their alleged membership of Militant. The MP is boosted by the fact that some of them are trade union delegates to the electoral college which conducts the reselection.

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Landowner appeals attacked

By PETER MULLIGAN AND ROBERT MORGAN

SCOTLAND

AN AMENDMENT by peers to the Natural Heritage (Scotland) bill allowing landowners to appeal against the designation of their land as sites of special scientific interest (SSSIs) was described as unworkable by Ian Lang, Scottish secretary, yesterday.

He told MPs while moving second reading of the bill that the amendment ran counter to the government's declared and long established policy. There was no question, he said, of the government lying down in front of the "land-owning body".

The amendment also calls on Scottish Natural Heritage, the new conservation body set

up by the bill, to review every SSSI in Scotland within five years.

Mr Lang said that to work to that timescale, it would have to review one of the 1,200 SSSIs in Scotland each working day of its first five years of life.

Under pressure from Labour MPs who castigated the peers' proposal as a wrecking amendment and urged the minister to renounce it in principle, he described it as flawed. He added: "The nature of the provision is something we are still considering.

We are rejecting the amendment in its present form. I will make the government position clear later."

For Labour, Donald Dewar, the shadow Scottish secretary, gave a general welcome to the bill and said that his party wanted Scottish Natural Heritage to be a success. He urged the government to overturn amendments made in the House of Lords. The Lords seemed to have misunderstood the situation.

The bill sets up Scottish Natural Heritage by merging the Nature Conservancy Council for Scotland and the Countryside Commission for Scotland.

Landsbergis turns to West amid fears of Kremlin action

By MARY DEJEVSKY IN MOSCOW AND OUR FOREIGN STAFF

AS FEARS of Soviet military action grew yesterday, President Landsbergis of Lithuania appealed for greater Western support for his Baltic republic's independence from Moscow.

On Saturday, 91 per cent of Lithuanians endorsed their government's 11-month-old independence declaration, according to preliminary results of a referendum that the Kremlin has declared illegal. Official figures are due to be made public today.

The Soviet military announced that it would begin ten days of exercises in Lithuania and in the neighbouring Baltic republics of Latvia and Estonia. Political activists reported no sign of manoeuvres in Lithuania yesterday, although two armoured personnel carriers drove through Vilnius on Sunday night.

Lithuanian leaders fear that Soviet forces might storm the republic's barricaded parliament building.

President Landsbergis told Portuguese television yesterday: "If Western countries do not do something politically, then the crackdown is possible." He said that he held out little hope that President Gorbachev would moderate his stance towards Lithuania without Western pressure.

More than 36 hours after the Lithuanian results became available, no Soviet political figure nor the official media had ventured any comment on Lithuanians' overwhelming vote for independence from the Soviet Union.

Television news programmes either ignored the subject completely or simply announced the results, without comment or pictures, low down in their news bulletins.

Pravda, the only official paper to publish on Mondays, printed a short announcement from Tass inconspicuously positioned on its second page. Headed "Results of the opinion poll in Lithuania", it gave percentage figures for the turnout and the result and noted that the referendum had been ruled "without judicial force" in a Soviet presidential decree.

The final paragraph ridiculed the key question, saying that it had been criticised in advance by "some independent sociologists" for effectively excluding the answer "No". "After all, who would want to live in a dependent, undemocratic republic?" the official news agency asked.

The large turnout and the sweeping victory for the supporters of independence, however, place President Gorbachev and the central leadership in a difficult position. Both would have been sufficient to initiate the secession procedure under Soviet law, if the Lithuanian leadership had chosen to follow that course, and will undoubtedly strengthen the hand of the Lithuanian government if it agrees to talk with Moscow.

President Gorbachev may seek refuge in a Tass-style dismissal of the question, but he will find it difficult to argue now that the Lithuanian government, which called the poll as a vote of popular confidence in its policies, lacks mass support.

The Soviet president is organising a national referendum on March 17, in which citizens would say whether they want to keep the Soviet Union whole.

Bronislovas Kuzmickas, the deputy chairman of the Lithuanian parliament, reported yesterday morning to the legislature that James Baker, the American Secretary of State, was encouraging about the poll, but offered no stronger promises of support. Mr Kuzmickas had just returned from a visit to Washington.

Previously, the American ambassador to Moscow, Jack Matlock, had said that Washington would expect both sides to honour the results of a Lithuanian referendum.

Pro-Soviet loyalists have said that they would try to hold the March referendum in military barracks and rural areas of Lithuania.

The Lithuanian government said that it would not interfere with the voting to avoid friction with Moscow.

Broadcast victory for Yeltsin

From MARY DEJEVSKY IN MOSCOW

BORIS Yeltsin, the Russian Federation leader, appeared yesterday to have won his battle to make a live broadcast on the main channel of Soviet central television. More than a week ago, Mr Yeltsin had requested an hour of live air time to defend himself against the gathering slur campaign against him and to answer questions from viewers.

Last week he told the Russian parliament that Leonid Kravchenko, the chairman of central television, had offered him half an hour on central television's second programme, with the stipulation that his broadcast be prerecorded. The offer, he had told parliament, was an insult to the office of Russian president and to the Russian parliament, and he had turned it down.

Yesterday, Mr Kravchenko, addressing his first press conference as head of the newly constituted all-union Soviet broadcasting corporation, said that Mr Yeltsin was likely to be offered a half-hour live broadcast on central television. He said no one, except President Gorbachev, had ever received more than half an hour for a direct address, and if an exception were made for Mr Yeltsin, then every other republic head would want the same.

The decision by the Soviet broadcasting authorities to reconsider their earlier terms is a victory for Mr Yeltsin and a tacit acknowledgement of the influence he wields. The Russian leader said last week that he wanted to deny publicly three specific charges: that he intended to form a separate Russian Federation army, that he had not defended the rights of ethnic Russians in the Baltic states and that his policies were directed at the disintegration of the Soviet Union.

Mr Kravchenko used his press conference yesterday for a similar exercise in self-justification, denying charges levelled against him by liberals in the Soviet media that he had stifled glasnost, reimposed censorship on state television and was opposed to perestroika. Asked about the reasons for the restructuring of Soviet broadcasting, announced at the end of last week in a presidential decree, he said only that it was intended to improve broadcasting quality.

Officially, the restructuring ends the direct link between the Soviet government and central broadcasting by redesignating the state committee on radio and television (Gosteleradio) - which had the status of a ministry - as the all-union broadcasting corporation. It emerged yesterday, however, that the frequencies would remain under the control of the ministry of communications and that the funding mechanism would be unchanged.

The restructuring does, however, give Mr Kravchenko the opportunity to make far-reaching personnel changes.

He disclosed yesterday that all existing radio and television staff would be required to compete for their jobs in a contract system of employment. At present, most are state employees with full security of tenure.



Laid back: Japanese schoolchildren have their own way of celebrating National Foundation Day at a ceremony in Tokyo attended by Toshiki Kaifu, the prime minister. The festival, a modern version of the traditional commemoration of the accession of Jimmu, Japan's first emperor, was banned by US occupation forces until its revival in 1967

Arms-cut bandwagon rolls to a halt

By MICHAEL EVANS, DEFENCE CORRESPONDENT

THE 22-nation conventional arms talks, which formally reopened in Vienna yesterday, appeared doomed to months of accusations and counter-accusations, and no progress on planned cuts in manpower.

In stark contrast to the last round of the Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) talks, when the 22 negotiators toasted each other with champagne after the draft of the treaty was completed for signing in Paris, there was every expectation among Western delegates yesterday that the arms-cutting bandwagon would come to a halt.

There was not even a formal meeting yesterday with the Soviet negotiators. The first session will not be until later this week. But British sources said yesterday there would be no progress until the Soviet delegates had resolved

the issues which were now preventing the ratification of the CFE treaty signed last November.

The three main difficulties are: the Soviet army's "bizarre" decision to transfer three motorised rifle divisions, including 900 tanks, 900 armoured personnel carriers and hundreds of artillery pieces, to the navy as coastal defence units; the discrepancy between Nato's estimate of the number of "objects of verification" - military facilities - in the Soviet Union which could be inspected under the CFE treaty, and the Kremlin's much lower figure; and the reasoning behind Moscow's transfer of thousands of tanks and other armoured equipment east of the Ural mountains.

British sources said that the Soviet Union had not provided satisfactory answers to any of the questions raised by Nato. The

replies so far were the clearest evidence of the changed climate between the West and the Kremlin.

Colonel-General Nikolai Chernov, an aide to General Mikhail Moiseyev, chief of the Soviet general staff, said last month that the West should not be worried. There was no deception intended. But James Baker, the United States Secretary of State, has advised President Bush against sending the CFE treaty to Congress for ratification until all the matters of concern to Nato had been cleared up.

British sources said the main issues were the transfer of the divisions from the army to the navy, and the Soviet sites which were subject to inspection. The shipping of tanks east of the Urals was not a breach of the treaty, but Nato was afraid the Soviet Union

was trying to build up a strategic reserve outside the area covered by the arms agreement.

During the CFE negotiations last year, the Soviet delegates unofficially told their Nato counterparts they had counted 1,600 military facilities which could be visited. But now they have reduced that figure to 895.

British sources said they had cut the number of sites to be inspected by removing treaty-limited items from certain facilities. For example, some sites had to have at least 30 separate items to merit an inspection. "Some of the sites we had counted now have 29 treaty-limited items," one source said.

While the Soviet Union was not being accused outright of "fiddling" the figures, this "exploitation" of the treaty provisions had added to the growing disenchantment with Moscow's attitude.

Civic Forum agrees dissolution pact

From CHRIS POMERY IN PRAGUE

THE two key factions of Civic Forum agreed to what local commentators called "a decent divorce" at the weekend, initiating arrangements to form two separate parties before the parliamentary election takes place in 17 months. Under the dissolution agreement, finalised at the country retreat of President Havel of Czechoslovakia, the factions will

remain under the umbrella of the forum in the short term in the interests of national unity.

Although outwardly an ineffectual compromise, the solution to Civic Forum's growing political divergences pays tribute to Mr Havel's smothering influence. He appears to have persuaded the right-wing faction to stop trying to convert the movement into a single political party. He also seems to have made the centre-left faction begin to organise itself into a separate party, rather than try to maintain the diffuse non-party citizens' alliance that toppled the communist regime in 1989.

Differences between the two factions had become increasingly obvious since a special Civic Forum congress four weeks ago voted in favour of a proposal to turn the movement into an orthodox hierarchical political party. The proposal was backed by Václav Klaus, the leader of the right-wing faction who is also chairman of the forum and the federal government finance minister. His two deputies, who represent opposite strategies within the movement, found themselves unable to agree at a press conference last week on what the new programme was.

The major disagreement between the two groups concerns the degree of government intervention during the painful transition to a free market. The dispute has, however, developed into more personal criticism of Mr Klaus, as

he has tried to instil discipline and to keep the parliamentary programme moving. Most deputies vote freely on all issues and have been chastised by several government ministers for slack attendance records that have created a backlog of unfinished business. "The agreement will make it



Havel: persuasive role in accord between factions

clearer who is who in parliament," Milan Kundera, one of forum's deputy chairmen and a supporter of Mr Klaus, said. "But I doubt it will speed up legislation."

He said that the right-wing group will hold a special meeting in mid-March to coincide with the next forum congress. The faction has already begun soliciting support from discussion groups

within the forum to form a right-wing coalition to fight the next election. Fund-raising and membership registration work has been under way for a fortnight, and Mr Kundera believes the party will make a formal announcement within three months.

"We've been accused of being anti-democratic," Mr Kundera said, referring to last month's congress during which regional delegates pushed through constitutional changes opposed by Prague liberals. "but we don't want to be defined negatively any more by what we're against. It's much easier to start something new than remedy something already existing."

Mr Klaus is clearly running the risk of being identified with a harsh economic reform programme that he is not yet able to control fully or to push through. Neither he, nor the centre-left faction, known inside Civic Forum as "the Liberal Club", can gauge their electoral popularity accurately, although both would certainly win more support than the Czechoslovak communist party in the federal parliament.

Since the Czechoslovak solution to most problems is to create another co-ordinating committee, there is a fear that the parliamentary programme will slow down even more, as this week-end's superficial agreement has not resolved the structural differences between the two groups.

45 die in convoy ambush

Harare - Gunmen in Mozambique have ambushed a convoy trying to deliver food to refugees in Malawi and killed 45 people. The incident occurred last Friday 10 miles north of the coal mining town of Moatize along the Tetsu corridor, the road connecting Malawi with Zimbabwe and now almost its sole link with the outside world (Jan Raath writes).

A witness said the convoy was led by a Mozambican army armoured personnel-carrier carrying about 40 troops. The vehicle had entered dense bush when it was hit by two rockets. "There was a big fireball and bodies flying everywhere." The rocket attack was followed by heavy automatic-weapon fire on civilian vehicles immediately behind it.

"Then the gunmen came out of the bush, firing from 200 yards away," the witness said. At least 20 attackers launched themselves at the convoy, looking for food. If anyone moved they were shot. "There was an Indian chap who was still alive in the car, and he was just shot from the back."

By the time the armoured vehicle that was supposed to be guarding the rear of the convoy arrived it was all over, he said. Of the dead, 38 were soldiers. Among the civilians was a child aged about two and an unidentified white man. The food, mostly maize, was part of a programme of emergency food aid despatched by the world food programme for the estimated 850,000 Mozambican refugees inside Malawi, due to start in December but postponed because of lack of security.

700 flee Albania

Ioannina, Greece - More than 700 Albanians have crossed the frontier between Albania and Greece since Friday seeking political asylum, police here said yesterday. This brings the total number of Albanian refugees to more than 1,000 since Thursday. (AFP)

President's visit

Paris - President Deby of Chad has arrived in France, his country's chief source of aid, for a two-day visit during which he will have his first meeting with President Mitterrand. The visit to Chad's former colonial power is also Mr Deby's first to a non-African country. Mr Deby overthrew President Habre in a coup last December. (Reuters)

Funeral victim

Oslo - A Norwegian policeman died of head injuries sustained when his horse reared and fell on him during the funeral procession of King Olav V on January 30. Oslo mounted police did not use helmets at the funeral as they were not an approved part of their uniform. The rules were changed after the accident to make helmets compulsory. (AP)

Prostate aid

Paris - A French device to relieve swollen prostate glands in middle-aged men has been approved for clinical experiments in the United States, its manufacturer, Technomed International SA, said. The apparatus, called Prostaton, works by aiming microwaves into the prostate gland, killing cells and reducing swelling. (Reuters)

Eating out

Singapore - The Pan Pacific hotel here is offering a Valentine's Day dinner for two travelling up and down in a glass-bubble lift on the outside of the 37-storey building, serenaded by an opera singer or a violinist. The price, including a night in a hotel suite and breakfast, is 1,468 Singapore dollars (\$432). (Reuters)

Sweden asks Soviet spy suspects to leave

From ASSOCIATED PRESS IN STOCKHOLM

SEVERAL Soviet citizens, including at least one diplomat, are being asked to leave Sweden under suspicion of spying on the defence system, national radio reported yesterday. Foreign ministry and security police spokesmen said they had no information on the report by the publicly owned radio network, adding that if it were true, they would have known about it.

However, the radio report said that, in a change from normal practice, the foreign council was not informed. The council is made up of senior representatives of the government and main opposition parties and is chaired by the king. The radio said it had not been decided whether formally to expel the Soviet citizens or discreetly

ask them to leave. The Swedish government has been particularly outspoken against the Soviet army repression in Lithuania and Latvia.

The national radio said the Soviet government might respond by expelling Swedish diplomats. It said members of the Soviet military intelligence organization, the GRU, were "believed to be involved in the illegal operations". The radio added: "Using the embassy as a front, espionage and recruiting of new agents are being carried out against Swedish defence and important parts of the defence industry."

Last December three Soviet citizens, including a low-level official at the embassy, were expelled as alleged KGB agents.

GERMAN NOTEBOOK by Ian Murray

Berlin plays power games in name of peace

Bids by London or Manchester to host the turn-of-the-century Olympics are seen as nothing short of a total irrelevance in German eyes, because nobody here doubts for a moment that they will be held anywhere other than Berlin.

Even in the days before the wall came down, the mayors of the two halves of the city were talking about a joint application. As the drive to unification gathered pace no less a person than President Bush suggested it would be a good venue for the 1996 games - even though Atlanta had other ideas.

"Berlin is the natural choice for the age, because it symbolises the fact that the Cold War is over," Walter Momper, the last mayor of West Berlin said. Events in the Baltic republics and a war in the Gulf have done nothing to dampen the enthusiasm of the united city's new grand coalition government to

act as hosts of a "peace games". Speculators in Cold War memorabilia are so sure that Berlin will be chosen, they are buying up bits of wall, barbed wire and camouflage netting. They offer anything from graffiti-covered segments of wall at DM20,000 (£6,900) to chippings at DM1 each. Buyers are snapping them up at what they hope are bargain prices and laying them down ready for a big influx of tourists for the games.

Bonn, which privately rejoices every time there is bad economic news from eastern Germany, will be very happy to see Berlin receive subsidies to host the games. It would see this as a consolation prize for failing to be chosen as united Germany's seat of government.

The Bundestag is due to decide on this before the summer recess and Bonn is increasingly confident now that a clear majority of members will vote to keep



both the parliament and government in their comfortable, calm quarters by the Rhine.

Famous former mayors of Berlin, like President von Weizsäcker and Willy Brandt have spoken in favour of it, but a far more influential figure in the eyes of German taxpayers has now recommended Bonn. He is Theo Waigel, the finance minister, who has predicted that a move to Berlin would cost a double-digit billion

figure, and has suggested that the money would be better spent on rebuilding the economy in the five east German states.

Heir Waigel's views are scarcely impartial because he is a Bavarian and undoubtedly sees Munich as the natural capital of Germany, or even of a united states of Europe. At heart he therefore has no desire to boost Berlin's importance. As the man who holds Germany's purse strings he has now given Bundestag members from the east good economic grounds to opt for Bonn. A survey of the diplomatic corps shows that it is the ambassadors from hard-up developing countries who would like to move to Berlin, while representatives from the industrialised countries prefer the better working conditions and environment of the Rhine valley.

Sadly from the public's point of view, one of the most historic and pretty houses on the river in Bonn is going to be closed to visitors following the sale of the Schomburgk Hof to the government of North Rhine-Westphalia, which is to use it as a guest house.

In 1839, a certain student at Bonn university, called Albert von Coburg-Gotha, met and first wooed the young queen of England. He pushed her on a swing along from one of the trees, whiskered sweet nothings at her and sat side by side at one of the little stone tables gazing out over the Siebenbrunn and the Drachenfels and eventually he proposed.

A year later they were married. In 1845 Queen Victoria was happy to make a return visit to Bonn for the unveiling of a statue to the town's most celebrated citizen, Beethoven.

The statue these days is the gathering point for anti-Gulf war demonstrators, who hang slogans saying "Nein" on its outstretched arm.

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Winnie Mandela's trial adjourned as witness is abducted

From GAVIN BELL IN JOHANNESBURG

THE trial of Winnie Mandela on kidnapping and serious assault charges was adjourned yesterday after a key witness was abducted from a church mission in Johannesburg. The incident followed the disappearance of four defendants, the subsequent appearance of one of them outside the court building, and statements by another witness that he is in fear of his life for testifying against Mrs Mandela, wife of Nelson Mandela, the deputy president of the African National Congress.

17 dead in Natal bus ambushes

From RAY KENNEDY IN JOHANNESBURG

THE killings of 17 people in Natal by gunmen who ambushed buses carrying passengers home from a prayer meeting has brought further despair to an area where more than 3,000 people have been killed in four years of inter-black feuding.

Less than two weeks ago, Nelson Mandela, the deputy president of the African National Congress, and Chief Mangosuthu Buthe, the leader of the Zulu-based Inkatha Freedom Party, buried their ideological differences and met for the first time in nearly 30 years to pledge their commitment to peace. Now the blood of innocents murdered outside a Natal township, ironically called Sweetwaters, is stark testimony to the failure of their efforts.

Ershad's guns case postponed

Dhaka - The trial of former President Ershad of Bangladesh was postponed after the high court asked the government to show why he should not be exempted from charges of possessing unlicensed weapons. Police seized 15 guns, some not registered, from his house after he left office last December.

Seoul MPs held

Seoul - Three South Korean MPs were arrested on bribery charges for accepting overseas trips paid for by lobbyists, the Seoul district prosecutor's office said. Lee Jai Keun and Lee Don Man are members of the opposition Party for Peace and Democracy, while Park Chin Gu belongs to the ruling Democratic Liberals. (Reuters)

Corruption fight

Kathmandu - King Birendra of Nepal has appointed a chief commissioner of a new anti-corruption authority, empowered to investigate government officials. He is Janardan Lal Malik, chairman of a team formed last April to investigate the suppression of Nepal's democracy movement. (AFP)

Press protest

Dhaka - Journalists in Bangladesh stopped work, and 900 marched through the streets of the capital demanding job security and the withdrawal of the anti-press special powers act. The journalists threatened to go on indefinite strike from next Monday if their demands were not met.

stiffs are in the care of the Methodist church. I have just now been informed that one witness was kidnapped last night... If it is true it is a very serious development, because it will obviously intimidate other witnesses.

Mr Swanepoel, appealing for time to reconsider his case, said: "I cannot simply proceed and have my witnesses come in, here if their lives are in danger... in fairness to the complainants, I cannot simply ask them to carry on in view of what has happened."

The prosecutor later identified the missing witness as Gabriel Polo Makgwe, aged 22, one of four youths whom Mrs Mandela and seven others are accused of kidnapping and seriously assaulting a year ago. Jerry Richardson, the leader of Mrs Mandela's body-

guards who posed as a football team, was sentenced to death in August for murdering one of the youths.

Mr Swanepoel, in response to reporters, said: "I am of course worried. Why would one suddenly last night kidnap the man? The answer is obvious." Asked how he intended to proceed when the trial resumed today, he said: "The man could be safe, and I don't have a problem. The man could be dead, and I do have a problem."

He said that the two surviving plaintiffs were in the care of the Methodist church and a legal resources centre, and as far as he knew they were safe. One of them, Kenneth Kgase, aged 31, recently emerged from hiding in a tribal homeland and told reporters that he was prepared to give evidence which he said would incriminate Mrs Mandela. But he added: "I live in fear of being assassinated all the time."

Police are still searching for four defendants who jumped bail last December, one of whom brazenly turned up at the Johannesburg supreme court last week to watch the trial. Before going back into hiding, he told a local newspaper that he had "just come to see what was going on".

Mr Justice M. S. Stegmann yesterday ordered the trial of the missing four, all of them former members of Mrs Mandela's so-called football club, to be held separately.

Aside from the activities taking place outside the court, the trial proceedings yesterday lived up to their promise of drama. After Mrs Mandela and her three remaining co-accused pleaded not guilty to all charges against them, Mr Swanepoel said that he intended to produce evidence of additional kidnappings in 1988 in which Mrs Mandela had taken part.

"Although the accused are not charged with these offences, the state will argue that such evidence is admissible as similar fact evidence," he said. He would also call forensic evidence of blood being found on all four walls, the ceiling, and curtains of outbuildings at Mrs Mandela's home in Soweto, as well as on one of two whips.

Mr Swanepoel said: "At the outset it has to be pointed out that, no matter who the accused are, this is not a political trial as far as the state is concerned." He added that the accused had been charged with ordinary common law crimes, kidnapping and assault, with intent to do grievous bodily harm.

Aquino denies she hid under bed

From VAUDINE ENGLAND IN MANILA

FOR the first time in Philippine history, the president took the witness stand yesterday in a libel case against a newspaper columnist. Luis Beltran wrote in August 1987 that President Aquino hid under her bed during a coup attempt.

Mrs Aquino, dressed in salmon pink, displayed her stubborn and contrary nature by choosing to appear, despite the advice of many staff and friends. Her performance was hesitant and often humiliating, although it was marked by an occasional sharp oratorical flourish.

After Mr Beltran wrote the column, Mrs Aquino invited

various reactions. The jury is still contemplating whether she was noble to pursue the Manila press, which many regard as irresponsible, or stupid for subjecting herself to needless harassment.

After the president had told the court clerk her name, age and address, she was questioned as to why her "house" (in the presidential palace grounds) has no street number. The judge interrupted her testimony to insist that she address the lawyers as "sir" in order to uphold the dignity of the law. This she did, but often with great sarcasm.

At one point during more than two hours of grueling cross-examination, she told the court: "While there is press freedom it is important that the public be given the truth and the right to know the truth". For this Mrs Aquino received warm applause - and an admonition from the judge that the trial was not a public rally.

The president's appearance was broadcast live on radio and television. The Philippines public could see her being forced to read the entire offending article while the packed, sweating crowd fanned themselves impatiently. She was made to do this so that the defence could point out the other more flattering points that Mr Beltran made in his column about Mrs Aquino's demeanour during the coup attempt.

Some observers describe her choice to take a stand against the press as brave. However, with a judiciary determined to prove its independence, however, and an aggressive defence team apparently pushing her to the verge of tears at times, Mrs Aquino's credibility may be damaged more by the trial than it was by the columnist's allegations.



Official beat: a musician from a Rio de Janeiro samba school pounding out the rhythm in the main carnival parade. This year's spectacular costumes and floats satirise the Gulf war, rain forest destruction, and Brazilian social and economic problems

Peking hearing of 'unrepentant' dissident opens

From CATHERINE SAMPSON IN PEKING

THE trial of Chen Ziming, a leading dissident, went ahead in Peking yesterday despite his attempts to delay it and gain more time to prepare his defence by going on hunger strike.

Mr Chen, an economist, aged 37, was charged with two crimes: plotting to overthrow the government, which carries a minimum sentence of ten years in prison; and spreading counter-revolutionary propaganda and agitation, which usually carries a sentence of at least four years.

Mr Chen's punishment is expected to be particularly harsh, not only because of his alleged "dual crime" but because he refuses to repent. He has been described by the official media as one of the four masterminds or "black hands" of the pro-democracy protests in early 1989. All were long-time activists and had worked for the Social and Economic Research Institute, a privately funded organisation that advocated radical reforms.

A notice outside the Peking intermediate court announced that the trial was to begin at 8.30am, and a court official confirmed that Mr Chen was present in court. The official would not comment on the state of the defendant's health. It was not known whether Mr Chen had stopped his hunger strike by the time he went on trial.

A heavy police cordon kept foreigners away from the courthouse and the notice-board. It is not known

whether Mr Chen's family members were allowed to attend the trial. Officially, Chinese trials are described as "open", but observers can only attend by invitation, and they are not allowed to divulge anything about the proceedings.

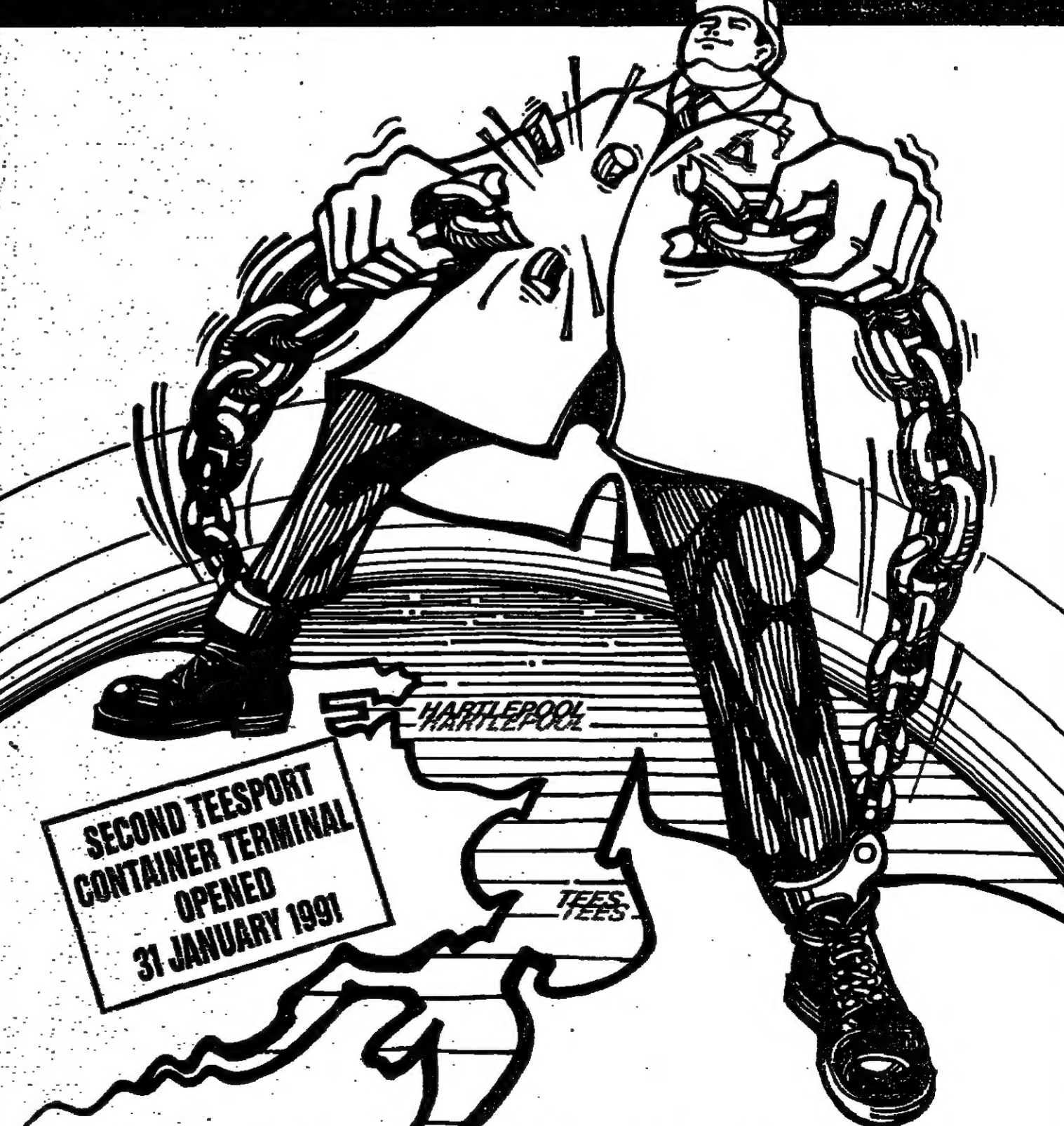
Mr Chen went on hunger strike on Thursday, according to Peking sources, and emphasised his protest by refusing to dress properly in prison, wearing only his underwear. He had been notified of the charges against him on February 2, leaving only a few days for his lawyer to read the thousands of pages of prosecution documents and prepare a defence.

Most of those tried since the beginning of January have been accused only of the lesser crime of counter-revolutionary propaganda and agitation. Twelve people have been sentenced to terms of between two and seven years in prison. Two other men, Chen Xiaoping, a legal expert, and Liu Gang, a physicist, are charged with plotting to overthrow the government but have not yet been sentenced.

The fourth "black hand", Wang Junbo, a newspaper editor, aged 32, is expected to go on trial today and is also expected to be charged with the "dual crime" of plotting to overthrow the government and spreading counter-revolutionary propaganda.

His wife has appealed to the court for more time to prepare a defence, and for an open trial to be conducted.

A NEW MOVING FORCE IS RELEASED



Leading the way in port privatisation

The ending of the Dock Labour Scheme and the encouragement of privatisation are two Government measures that are releasing the trust and municipal ports of the UK to exploit to the full their pent up energies, expertise and assets.

Those who choose the liberating road of privatisation will be ready to take their rightful place in the 1992 economic and commercial scene as dynamic, broad-based, integrated transport businesses.

In the van of the dash for freedom is the Tees & Hartlepool Port Authority. With a Bill for privatisation now before Parliament. With a new concept labour force making remarkable productivity gains. With a £30 million programme doubling Teesport Container and Ro/Ro capacity, and making Hartlepool the best port of its

kind on the North East coast. With a drive into the wider distribution and transport business. With a strong property portfolio under active development.

Even under constraint, Tees & Hartlepool has established itself as the UK's third busiest port and has increased tonnage handled every year for the past five years. In joint venture flagship schemes with Teesside Development Corporation it is making its own contribution to the regeneration of the North East.

Freed of constraint, it will be poised to build swiftly on its considerable strengths and play a leading role in the transformation of the UK ports industry.

TEES/SIDE
Initiative Talent Ability

Tees & Hartlepool Port Authority

Woodrow Wyatt

Let's have no backsliding

On December 4 I wrote in *The Times*: "Saddam Hussein may still not get away with it, but his chances will rise as President Bush, no longer bolstered by Mrs Thatcher, starts to look wobbly."

Fortunately, President Bush stopped wobbling and has been staunchly encouraged by Mr Major, in contrast to the distinctly feeble response from most of the European Community. Mr Major has faithfully followed the lines set out by Mrs Thatcher, who had arranged which British forces should go to the Gulf and chosen their commander (against some opposition in Whitehall). The later addition of Buccaneers and extra forces was a natural development which would have happened had she still been there.

Mr Major has handled the British war effort precisely as Mrs Thatcher would have done. He sees a duty to right a grievous wrong done to Kuwait and to protect the world at large against Saddam controlling about half the world's oil supplies were to be kept in Kuwait and march into Saudi Arabia. Because Saddam would then double or triple oil prices, not only the non-oil-producing countries such as Germany, Japan, France and Italy would suffer. The east European countries and the industrially backward parts of Asia and Africa would be crippled in their attempts to raise their people above the poverty level.

Mr Major does not glory in war any more than Mrs Thatcher did, though during the Falklands campaign a malicious myth was created that she did. When British servicemen lost their lives, she wept. Her rejoicing was confined to the successful conclusion of the conflict, with her sorrow for the dead and wounded unabated.

Mr Major's faithful adherence to the manner in which a just war should be fought, determined by his former chief, has so far belied the fear I expressed here on December 4, that "without her, Britain may soon descend to the rank of a minor power such as the Benelux countries, France or Italy".

His consolidation of the special relationship with Washington, compared with the disarray of our EC partners, who have demonstrated their utter inability to formulate a common foreign policy, has given Britain greater clout in resisting moves towards a politically federal Europe. A single currency and a central European bank responsible to no-one but itself are definitely off the agenda for a very long time, and may never get back on it.

I have total confidence in Mr Major successfully maintaining Mrs Thatcher's policies in this area. It is a pity that he and cabinet colleagues pushed us into the exchange-rate mechanism last October against Mrs Thatcher's better judgment. A U-turn to get us out so soon is not practical politics, so we are stuck with it.

Hence we cannot lower interest rates immediately, as we should if we are to revive industry and stem massive rises in unemployment before unnecessary and possibly lasting damage is done. ERM

membership was not a prerequisite for bringing inflation down: it was falling already. In a year's time the ERM may help us to maintain inflation at a much lower level, but tied to the German mark as we are now, this cannot be guaranteed. In 1987-8, when Mr Lawson shadowed the mark, we put our interest rates down when they should have gone up. Now, with Germany recently raising interest rates, we are prevented from putting them down.

In consequence of policies endorsed by members of the present government, our economy is in a worse mess than it need be and Mr Major's chances of winning an election at the moment look rocky. The danger is that to improve them he and his cabinet may be tempted to abandon too many of the Thatcherite principles of the radical revolution that lifted us from decline to the uplands of general prosperity. Despite the present grime, the underlying strength of industry and commerce places us in an immeasurably better position than in 1979 to advance again when the world recessionary cycle ends. It surely will, like all other recessions.

To try to make itself electable, Labour has shifted light years towards Thatcherism. That is where the middle ground now is. For leading Conservatives to talk of some kind of *laissez-faire* consensus to accommodate the doddier ideas on public spending still retained in Labour's policies is folly. Mr Major's enthusiastic support last weekend for the imaginative scheme initiated by Kenneth Baker, when education secretary, for state schools to opt for independence is admirable and pure Thatcherism. To abandon the community charge in favour of a type of property tax and the payment of all education by central government would be to concede defeat to Labour.

Have the Tory leaders forgotten that the community charge was by no means a disaster at the last local elections, and that those Tory councils which kept their charges down did rather well? This government has pledged itself to reduce taxes. Paying for education centrally would add around 3p-5p to the standard rate of income tax. Labour would love this, but the country would not.

Certainly public services must be improved, particularly by injecting private-enterprise elements where possible. Ministers who suggest that this sound Thatcherite principle should be abandoned and that more money should be thrown at public services without making them more efficient play Labour's game.

To succeed, ministers must stick to Mrs Thatcher's style of conviction politics and must not nervously adopt what may seem to them to be convenience politics in the mistaken belief that the electorate will respect, and not despise, them. With a bit of undeserved luck, a speedy finish to the Gulf war might set off a euphoric world mini-boom to mask the government's recent economic failures long enough for a window of opportunity to appear, briefly, for a winning election date.

Early that morning, a man on the radio said that wildlife was under threat from the snow. Birds in particular could not get enough to eat. He then gave a long list of what birds liked. It was amazing. You did not need worms and ants to open a restaurant, nor berries and seeds; the modern bird was patently as prone to gourmet faddery as the rest of us. What it was into these days was wholemeal bread, muesli, bacon rind, crushed walnuts, grated cheese, cornflakes...

I hinged upright in bed. I had all that stuff. I could clean up. I could be Francis Roux, the ornithological brother, three Michelin beaks, the Birdman of Crickwood. All I did not have was the premises. I wellied up, and went into the garden. But the lawn beneath the snow was granite, there was no question of banging in a post and nailing a platform to it — and then I remembered the cocktail trolley. A gift so naïf it had never left the garage, it would unquestionably, now, be just the thing you have to have a gimmick in the restaurant game, and could I not hear one bird selling another how it had eaten in this really wacky place, it had two big wheels and

High morale is crucial if soldiers are to fight under conditions of extreme fear, privation and uncertainty. As allied aircraft continue to pound Iraqi forces, the allied ground forces now have to guess the state of morale in the Iraqi army which faces them in Kuwait and along the Iraqi-Saudi border.

In past wars, air bombardment has sometimes led to complete demoralisation of the troops under fire, but elite divisions are likely to be more able to withstand it and fight on.

There were examples of both collapse and defiance during the second world war. The fortified Italian island of Pantelleria, between Tunisia and Sicily, was subjected to massive bombing for a month from May 8, 1943. When British troops finally invaded the island on June 11, the Italian garrison of 11,000 men surrendered without firing a shot.

Conversely, during the Italian mainland campaign, three savage battles were fought for Monte Cassino, a key point in the German winter defensive line blocking the allied advance on Rome. Tactical and strategic bombers were used to support Allied ground troops. On March 15, 1944, 1,400 tons of bombs were dropped on Cassino, yet it

Can Iraqi morale hold out?

John Bullen, drawing on second world war parallels, assesses the effect on troops of non-stop bombing

did not fall until May 18. The difference between the defenders of Pantelleria and the German 1st Parachute Division holding Cassino was that the *Fallschirmjäger* were soldiers of the highest quality and morale.

The elite formations of the Iraqi army are the eight divisions of Republican Guards. The Guards held in reserve in dug-in positions to counter an allied breakthrough of the Iraqi defence lines, are equipped with 1,000 tanks, including 500 formidable T72s. They are taller, better educated — many holding engineering degrees and diplomas — stronger and fitter than the average Iraqi recruit, and they receive better pay, rations and equipment. The equivalent of Napoleon's Imperial Guards or Hitler's Waffen SS, the Republican Guards are dedicated to Saddam.

Iraq has suffered immense physical damage from the allied air assault. Yet the Republican Guards are well dug-in over an area of more than 1,000 square miles. Their tanks, armoured personnel carriers and self-propelled guns are protected by sand

revetments and are able to survive anything but a direct hit.

As well as the Republican Guards, there are 400,000 other Iraqi troops. They are deployed behind successive linear defences, protected by enormous minefields, composed of trenches (some, apparently, filled with oil), bunkers, revetments, engineer glads, and dug-in armour and artillery.

Many of these men showed their fortitude during the Iran-Iraq war against Iranian "human-wave" attacks. During that war, however, none had to face the terrible destructive effects of the massed air bombardment they are now undergoing. A few Iraqi troops have deserted, although the extensive minefields and dedicated Republican Guards seem to be preventing a more constant haemorrhage.

The closest historical parallel to the Gulf war is the Normandy campaign in 1944 in which mechanised, armoured armies manoeuvred and where the western allies had overwhelming air and naval supremacy. Both the RAF and the American air force had waged a strategic and tactical air offensive

that pulverised the Luftwaffe and severely damaged German communications. The fate of the Wehrmacht under allied air attack is a grim portent for the Republican Guards, even if their morale is still high.

Take the ordeal of the superb Panzer-Lehr division. Ordered north to confront the D-Day invasion of June 6, 1944, the division experienced its first air attack at 5.30am on June 7, losing 200 vehicles during the day. On June 25, as part of Operation Cobra, American heavy and medium bombers hammered the St Lô area, where the dug-in Panzer-Lehr was based, smashing its infantry, artillery and armour and causing widespread demoralisation. Cobra did not end the Normandy campaign, but carpet-bombing paved the way for the American breakthrough at St Lô.

Generalleutnant Fritz Bayerlein, commander of the Panzer-Lehr division, wrote graphically afterwards of the bruising effect of the bombing:

The three-hour bombardment on June 25... had an exter-

minating morale effect on the troops, physically and morally weakened for 45 days. The long duration of the bombing, without any possibility for opposition, any possibility of escape, created a feeling of helplessness, weakness and inferiority. Therefore the morale of a great number of men grew so bad, that they, feeling the uselessness of fighting, surrendered, deserted to the rear... Only particularly strong and brave men could endure this strain...

During the bombardment... some of the men got crazy and were unable to carry out anything... For me, who during this war was in every theatre, this was the worst I ever saw.

Yet battle is a waterbath for the front-line soldier. The comradeship, group loyalty and self-sacrifice engenders can transcend all fear. Nothing is pre-ordained in war.

If the morale of the Republican Guards holds, in spite of round-the-clock division-by-division bombing, shortages of supplies and deprivation of sleep, then they may choose to fight and die indomitably, not for Iraq, not for Saddam, but for each other.

The author is a curator at the Imperial War Museum. These are his personal views.

Michael Hornsby, agriculture correspondent, urges a new approach to subsidies

Weed out the high-cost farmers

Much wailing and grinding of ploughshares, mingled with pleas of poverty and warnings about deterioration of the countryside, can be expected when the National Farmers' Union begins its annual meeting today. The latest agriculture ministry survey suggests that the number of full-time farmers leaving the land rose to 5,000 last year, against an annual average of about 2,500 over the past decade.

Jobs in farming have been falling steadily for the past 150 years. The cause, for most of that time, was the replacement of hired labour by mechanisation, rather than a fall in the number of farmers. Indeed, for 15 years after the second world war, the number of full-time farmers in England and Wales rose sharply to a peak of 306,000 — 57,000 more than in 1851 at the height of farming's Victorian golden age.

But with the numbers engaged in agriculture now representing only 2.1 per cent of the total workforce, any further fall will increasingly be among farmers and their families. There are now 237,400 farm holdings in Britain, but only 223,000 farmhands, of whom 40,000 are employed part-time and 90,000 seasonally or casually. In other words, a majority of farms now have no non-family, full-time labour, and only the biggest and most profitable employ more than two or three permanent staff.

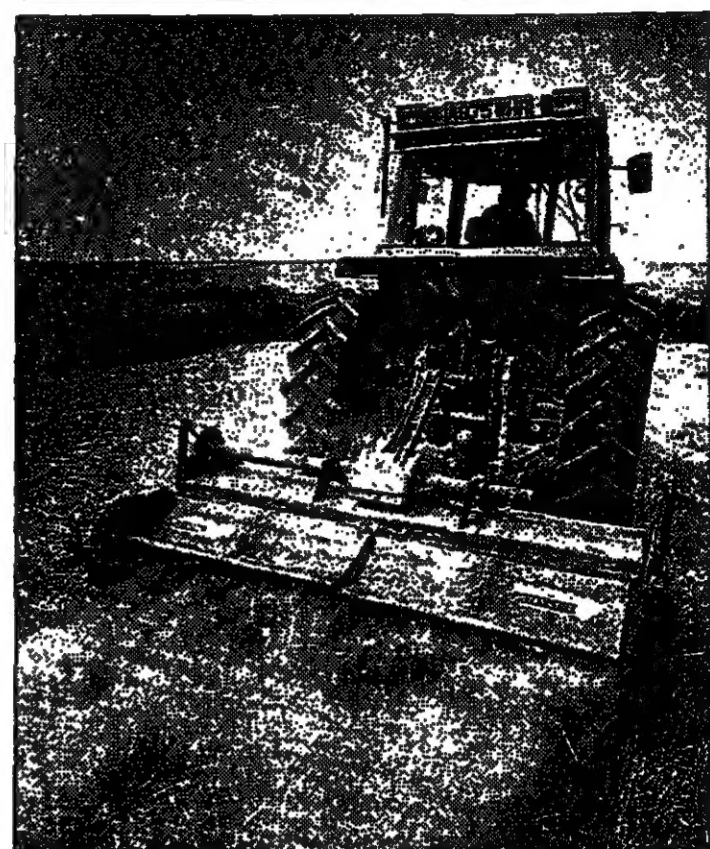
No one denies that farmers are going through tough times. The official estimate is that the total net income of farmers and their spouses last year (what was left

after meeting rent and interest charges and paying hired labour, family workers, partners and directors) amounted to £13.3 billion, 14 per cent down on 1989. After allowing for inflation, the NFU calculates, this represented a real decline of 22 per cent, leaving real income at its lowest level in more than 40 years.

Put another way, net farm income is today roughly the same in money terms as it was in 1980, but its purchasing power has been approximately halved. Meanwhile, farmers' bank borrowings rose to £7 billion last year, and for the first time interest payments exceeded £1 billion. Investment is falling. Forty per cent of tractors are more than ten years old, and fewer new ones were sold last year than at any time since regular records began to be kept in the mid-1960s.

Yet the picture is more complex than it appears. Farmers' debts — estimated at around £13 billion if non-bank borrowings such as mortgages and hire purchase are included — are relatively low when set against their total assets (land, buildings, machinery, crops and livestock), which are valued at about £74 billion. This is a much healthier ratio of debts to assets than in most other industries, although the return earned on assets in farming is less than in other sectors.

Aggregate net farm income, while certainly falling, is an increasingly unreliable guide to the wealth or poverty of individual farmers. In 1989-90, net income in England ranged from £2,300 on small lowland cattle and sheep farms to around £33,000 on large arable farms. Large dairy farms



After the long drift of farmhands from the land, any new exodus must be of the farmers themselves — and the inefficient among them should be encouraged to go

and large pig and poultry units averaged net incomes of £43,400 and £93,400 respectively.

Net farm income also excludes earnings not directly derived from farming. Yet nearly 100,000 of Britain's 279,000 farmers are now part-time operators with other sources of income. Nearly 60 per cent of food production is generated by no more than 13 per cent of farmers. At a time of growing food surpluses, the case for blanket support of farmers, including those who could well survive without it or for whom farming is a secondary occupation, looks increasingly untenable even to long-time defenders of the EC's common agricultural policy.

Whatever case there may still be on the continent for the CAP as a means of halting rural depopulation, it does not apply in Britain,

where the number of people living in the remotest parts of the countryside has been growing steadily for the past two decades, while the number of those involved in agriculture has been falling.

For more than a decade, the EC has been struggling with little success to control the cost of the CAP's price support system, which has in effect guaranteed many farmers a minimum return for almost as much as they could produce. The real cost to the taxpayer of supporting agriculture has more than doubled since the 1960s, yet average farm income has not kept pace with incomes in the rest of the economy. Even farmers are coming to accept that they may have been worshipping at the altar of a false god.

Raymond MacSharry, the EC agriculture commissioner, has pro-

posed drastic cuts in price support. To compensate farmers for loss of income, he is also proposing a system of direct grants aimed at the smallest farms, coupled with production restraints on the biggest and most efficient. Britain, with the largest proportion of big farms in the Community, has rightly rejected this approach as a recipe for support of non-viable farms in perpetuity at its expense.

Yet the "supply management" solution favoured by Sir Simon Gourlay, the outgoing president of the NFU, makes little more sense economically. He wants the EC to impose compulsory restraints on inputs (the amount of land in production, the number of breeding animals in a herd, the quantity of fertiliser used per acre and so on). That, he argues, is a "least bad" option that would prevent food surpluses and meet some of the environmental concerns about intensive farming, while enabling price support and protection against cheap imports to continue.

This line is under fire from large cereal farmers in the NFU and is openly rejected by the rival Country Landowners' Association, which argues that rationing inputs in this way would ossify the farm structure, stifle competition and prevent Britain exploiting its comparative advantage as price subsidies come down. John Gummer, the agriculture minister, is sympathetic to this view, but has yet to say clearly in what direction the common agricultural policy should be headed.

He will have a chance to do so when he addresses the NFU delegates in Kensington town hall today. He should tell them that price subsidies must be abolished. The savings could be used to finance a more limited system of direct grants to support farming where that is desirable on environmental grounds, and to reward those who look after the countryside. Farmers who are not viable as food producers should in general be encouraged to quit or else to rent their land, or contract out its management, to larger neighbours. There is still a living to be made in agriculture provided it is shared between fewer farmers.

...and moreover

ALAN COREN

I was a crazy time to open a restaurant. Nobody's eating out, except journalists charged with writing articles on why nobody's eating out.

But a restaurateur's got to dream, boy: it comes with the territory.

Especially when the territory looks like the one at the moment, and when the restaurateur has had the dream for 40 years, ever since he sat in scripture classes doodling moustaches on seraphim, filling in the "o"s in The Book of Revelations, redrawing the endpaper map of the Holy Land to include Piglet's house, but scrupulously (some might say religiously) leaving unadorned the colour plate with the dream in it.

It showed a little *al fresco* place in Assisi. The owner was sitting at its one table, with a rabbit in front of him. He was not eating the rabbit. It was the rabbit who was eating. The rabbit was a customer. Beside it, a chicken family was tucking in, and down the further end of the table, a couple of tortoises were sharing a side-salad. The place was obviously doing fantastic business: not only was a mouse taking lunch in the owner's hand, and a party of wrens pecking seed off his knee, a large blue bird was standing on one of his shoulders, and a ginger cat was curled up on the other; clearly, they had failed to book, but were prepared to wait.

I cannot now recall what the homiletic subtext of all this was supposed to be, I know only that the overt message was plain: if

the joint was clean, the food good, the patron jolly, and the prices reasonable, animals would beat a path to your door. I never forgot this, even though it took me a long time to get around to acting upon it.

Last Sunday, I opened my first restaurant.

Early that morning, a man on the radio said that wildlife was under threat from the snow. Birds in particular could not get enough to eat. He then gave a long list of what birds liked. It was amazing. You did not need worms and ants to open a restaurant, nor berries and seeds; the modern bird was patently as prone to gourmet faddery as the rest of us. What it was into these days was wholemeal bread, muesli, bacon rind, crushed walnuts, grated cheese, cornflakes...

I hinged upright in bed. I had all that stuff. I could clean up. I could be Francis Roux, the ornithological brother, three Michelin beaks, the Birdman of Crickwood. All I did not have was the premises. I wellied up, and went into the garden. But the lawn beneath the snow was granite, there was no question of banging in a post and nailing a platform to it — and then I remembered the cocktail trolley. A gift so naïf it had never left the garage, it would unquestionably, now, be just the thing you have to have a gimmick in the restaurant game, and could I not hear one bird selling another how it had eaten in this really wacky place, it had two big wheels and

two little wheels, and "ticky individual cubicles set into the floor. The Muesli Room, The Rindery, The Cheese 'n' Walnut Suite...

I hurried back inside, and into the kitchen, whereupon I discovered that the stuff I'd thought I had was not quite as I'd imagined: the bacon had no rind, the cheese was soft and grating-resistant, the walnuts were pecans, the cornflakes were Coco Pops, and so on — yet, on reflection, might these too, not constitute a marketing plus, sweeping the smart winged world with their chic novelty? There was, after all, a time when people thought kiwi was boot-polish, gave monkfish to the cat, and, when offered a board of goat-cheese, politely asked the waiter when the man was coming to do the drains.

So I sliced the bacon into delicate strips, chopped the Camembert into tiny cubes, crushed the pecans into beak-sized morsels, and I decanted them into separate compartments in the trolley alongside the Coco Pops and the chunks of grizzly bread, and I went back into the house, and I took covert station at an upstairs window, as any eager new restaurateur would, and I sat there for an hour and no-one came, and I kept going back for the next six hours, and no-one came, and at four o'clock it started to snow again, and by half-past, the entire untaxed snowglobe was covered, as if it had never been.

I tell you, nobody's eating out these days. Ask any journalist.

When Reagan faced a coup

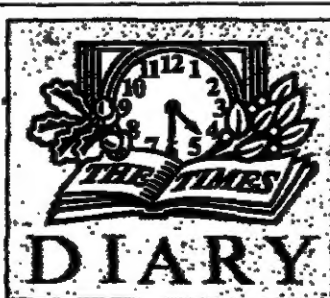
George Bush might have become American president more than a year earlier than he did if White House staff had got their way. A story circulating in Washington claims that in 1987, when Howard Baker took over as White House chief of staff, he was presented with a report from other presidential employees calling on him to implement the 25th amendment of the constitution, which provides for the replacement of a disabled president by the vice-president.

The report said that President Reagan — who only the other day was entertaining Mrs Thatcher at his 80th birthday party — was "lazy, inept and inane" and did not read papers sent to him, preferring instead to watch old movies on television.

The story emerged at a medical conference at George Washington University on the impact of the health of world leaders on history. Dr Herbert Abrams, a medical historian at Stanford University, says that Baker spoke to Reagan, concluded that the president was competent and disregarded the advice. "Presidents are not removed unless they demonstrate glibbling idiocy or delusions of grandeur," says Abrams.

Tales of Reagan's short attention span and lack of interest in detail were legion during his presidency, but this is the first time anyone has claimed that White House staff sought to take such drastic action to resolve the problem.

White House officials refuse to comment on the story, although Lawrence Mohr, the White House deputy physician, says the Bush administration has devised a procedure for dealing with any future presidential disability. "I am not at liberty to discuss the details," he adds.



Capital reshape

Richard Rogers, Prince Charles's least favourite architect, will meet Labour party officials today to finalise plans for what is being touted as "a new vision of London", one that will "enhance the urban landscape and the lives of London residents".

Rogers, who designed the Lloyd's building, has been signed up by Mark Fisher, Labour's arts spokesman, to produce a report funded by publisher Paul Hamlyn. An insider says: "The two have worked very closely and have looked at examples in Paris and Barcelona to see what can be done here." Politician and architect are said to feel that London's public spaces are currently neglected, that new public buildings are needed and that the Thames is under-used. "They are trying to organise a programme to revive the life of the city by setting a new agenda," says one source grandly.

Snow go

The semi-arctic conditions that led to cancellation of almost the entire football programme at the weekend should have been ideal for the national outdoor skating championships. But they too fell victim to the weather.

Because of a succession of warm winters that failed to freeze the water at Bury Fen in Cambridge-

shire, the reigning champion, Stuart Horspool, who won the King Edward VII cup in 1986 and 1987, had waited four years for the chance of a hat-trick.

Thomas Watson Reynolds, the organiser, says dejected skaters spent Saturday scooping the snow off the rink by hand in preparation for the event. "We were all set to go, then five inches of snow fell overnight. We couldn't use a bulldozer or snow plough because it would have broken the ice."



Pavement politics

Lambeth's Labour council, more often associated with the antics of the loony left, was basking in the plaudits of commuters, shoppers and residents alike yesterday for the efficiency and speed with which it cleared roads and pavements during the cold spell. But what a grateful public did not know was that council workers were working on their own initiative.

When the borough was charged-capped last year, councillors ruled that money could be saved by leaving gritting lorries and road clearing equipment in their garages in the event of bad weather. In a display of commendable insouciance, council workers ignored the decision. Not that Joan Twelves, the council leader, was going to let such embarrassing

details impair her enjoyment of the unaccustomed praise. "Our workers pulled out all the stops. We are proud of them," she said.

Tell him, someone

First-time novelists can be forgiven for not knowing how these things are meant to work, but Stephen Fry has terrified his publisher's long-established authors by breaking the cardinal rule of the writers' circle. He has delivered his manuscript on time. None of the anguished phone calls, letters and faxes that normally characterise the tortured relationship between writer and publisher; just a neatly typed manuscript entitled *The Liar* landing on executive editor Sue Freestone's desk at Heinemann on the specified day.

No-one was more surprised than Freestone herself. She has been quick to hold up Fry's shining example to some of her other errant authors. Michael Bywater and Douglas Adams, both long overdue on their deadlines, are "in a state of high panic," she says. Irma Kurtz is another. "Irma showed me a few chapters which I thought were absolutely brilliant. I made the unfortunate mistake of telling her. Since then she has not produced a single page."

Fry, who is more used to the world of television, where deadlines mean what they say, will surely know better next time.

Another casualty of the weather yesterday was Christina Foyle, who failed to make the monthly Foyle's literary lunch for the first time since she inaugurated it more than 60 years ago. Snowed in at her home in Essex, she missed the unlikely pairing of Nicholas Ridley introducing the guest of honour, Roy Hattersley ("the poor man's Willie Whitelaw", Ridley dubbed him). She will write to all who did attend to apologise.



WELL MET IN BONN

Germany and Britain are both countries in need of friends: above all of each other's friendship. The Germans fear the security vacuum which American withdrawal from Europe would leave behind; the British fear exclusion from a continental federation. John Major's first visit to Bonn as prime minister yesterday gave him a chance to offer Chancellor Kohl the compromise both countries need. The two men have resolved to develop a close working relationship. That is a necessary, though not a sufficient, condition for an Anglo-German deal which could reconcile the two nations' interests.

Yesterday's talks were naturally overshadowed by the war — the present war, fortunately, rather than the one which ended over 45 years ago. German public opinion should be gratified by the prime minister's tribute to Bonn's "most generous donation" of some £350 million to the British war effort. Mr Major's aloofness from British criticism of them is greatly appreciated by the Germans, whose financial contribution to the Gulf war now exceeds £5 billion.

None the less the Germans have paid a high political price for their scruples against any overt military involvement. The American honeymoon on which the new Germany had embarked came to an abrupt end when the White House found Britain to be the more useful ally in a crisis. American forces have been moved from Germany to the Middle East in significant numbers already; some may not come back.

This unscheduled withdrawal is unwelcome in Bonn. With the new hard line in Moscow sending waves of panic across central Europe and stimulating a new bout of the German pessimism, the role of Britain as a guarantor of European security becomes important. Germany, more than any other country, has an interest in creating a framework which would bring Poland, Czechoslovakia and Hungary under the western security umbrella. With America increasingly overextended, German strategists see Britain and France as the only

powers which might be willing to commit forces abroad to keep the peace in Europe.

Britain's importance in German eyes has been further enhanced by a slight but perceptible cooling of relations between Herr Kohl and President Mitterrand. Mr Major has skillfully seized his chance to persuade the Germans to look again at British ideas on economic and political union. Herr Kohl seemed to hint at this yesterday when he acknowledged the contradictions between his guest's modest European vision and his own more ambitious one, but added: "The important thing now is... that we do not exclude differing opinions."

The most ticklish controversies for both countries are, of course, those in which neither Britons nor Germans are united. The German foreign minister, Hans-Dietrich Genscher, recently demanded an acceleration of progress towards political union to ensure a more coherent response to regional conflicts such as that in the Gulf. But the Bundesbank's Karl Otto Pöhl thinks that centralisation of decision-making in the Community has already gone too far in some areas. With a similarly wide spectrum here, it should be possible for compromises to take shape by next autumn, when the intergovernmental conference process reaches its climax.

Each government's preoccupations — preserving free trade through the GATT by reforming the CAP, as Mr Major wants, or reducing the powers of the Council of Ministers compared to those of the Strasbourg Parliament, as Herr Kohl wants — must be seen against the rhetorical backdrop of Anglo-German relations. Britain has still not done justice to the human impact of German reunification. A full-scale tour by the Prince and Princess of Wales to Germany's new provinces in the east would be as popular as their visit to West Germany in 1987. Frankness between friends should not preclude generosity, which can take many forms besides cash.

IRAQIS AGAINST SADDAM

President Saddam Hussein's grip on Iraqi policy appears unimpaired by civil disruption and suffering. The chances of avoiding, or shortening, a destructive ground war almost certainly depend on Saddam's removal. But western governments, however much they may hope for such a development, rightly insist that Iraq's leadership is a matter for the Iraqi people.

These virtuous principles have been buttressed by two kinds of doubt. The first concerns the ability of his opponents to pose a credible threat to Saddam. The second has to do with Iraq's political complexity.

To foreign eyes Iraq appears near-unmanageable. Any attempt at intervention in its political life is like walking blindfold into a quagmire. Saddam's dictatorship depends on a tiny circle drawn almost exclusively from Iraq's Sunni Arabs, which form less than a quarter of the population. Shia Muslims, hundreds of whose religious leaders have been imprisoned or assassinated, compose the majority. But they have had little in common with the Kurds, who number a further fifth of Iraqis. Political, ethnic and religious faultlines abound in a potential opposition ranging from communists to fundamentalists, from Christians to Turkomans.

The assumption has therefore been that Saddam will only be overthrown by a palace coup by the military or some dissident group in the ruling Baath party. Saddam takes extraordinary precautions against a coup and is ruthless towards anyone, even within his own clan, dimly suspected of plotting, but assassination attempts have still punctuated his reign. The reports of executions of army officers (and Saddam's dismissal late last year of his chief of staff and his defence minister) are nothing new. He made a habit of sacking generals during the Iran-Iraq war, often because their victories had made them

too popular. But the rumblings of discontent could yet reach a critical point. Regime's like Saddam's do not bend. They break, often without warning.

So total has been Saddam's command of Iraq's power structures, however, that even a patch from within the ruling elite would be no guarantee against a dangerous power vacuum. It only avert such a prospect, the allies, both Arab and western, should be thinking more actively about Iraq after Saddam. The dialogue began last month between the Foreign Office and some of Iraq's external opposition groups is a promising start — particularly as, after years of feuding, they now have the beginnings of a common platform which deserves support.

Sixteen of these organisations (plus an independent former general) subscribe to a joint declaration negotiated in December in Damascus. It calls for an interim all-party government which would guarantee freedom of speech, the press, rights of assembly and political and religious freedoms. Elections would be organised within two years. The Kurds, indispensable to any form of national reconciliation, would be accorded the cultural rights, administrative autonomy and share in government decisions they were promised in an aborted 1970 accord.

Dialogue is hampered because, for patriotic reasons, the opposition is united against the war. But so long as it is not obviously self-evident that the continuation of a military dictatorship in Iraq would be in the best interest of Middle Eastern stability, the allies should welcome the coalition's platform and give its representatives a fair hearing in their chancelleries. Precisely because its unifying feature is patriotism, the Iraqi opposition stands a chance of healing Iraq's war wounds. It must begin to feature in planning for peace in the Gulf.

DESIGNER SNOW

The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents has warned people not to skate on thin ice during the present cold snap. Metaphorically, the advice came too late for British Rail. Yesterday its spokesmen were plaintively appealing to London commuters "because of weather conditions" to avoid Network SouthEast between 8 and 9am, which is rather like urging lemmings to stay away from high places.

In fact it was not snowing at the time. The network was suffering a shortage of trains which worked; either passengers could not get into them as the doors were frozen shut, or the trains would not move as their motors were burnt out. Many of the trains affected appear to be of the more modern kind, designed to cram in as many people as possible during the peak between 8 and 9am, an achievement in which BR usually takes as much pride as any other sardine canner. Unfortunately BR forgot to design the right kind of snow to go with them.

Last weekend's was the loose and dusty sort, which responded to the merest breeze with a blizzard-like flurry. Various mechanical devices necessary to the opening and closing of train doors, particularly the sliding kind, seem to breathe in more than they breathe out, causing them to become jammed with fluffy white stuff. It was all the fault of the snow for being the wrong type.

One of the pleasures of the British winter is the spectacle of BR reacting to snow with surprise. "It can't be..." they say to each other as the first flakes drift past the signalbox window, implying that if there were any justice the noble efforts they put into dealing with it last winter should have

earned them a lifetime's immunity. Because it is never going to snow again, BR seems to tell itself, why worry about all the points, doors, motors and signals which add up to a modern rail system? Suddenly, due to a natural catastrophe as unlikely as a beached whale on Platform 3, all its well laid plans have come undone. So what it deserves is public sympathy, and admiration for the way its courageous staff — motivated not at all by overtime payments but purely by dedication to the common good — struggles with wild elemental forces and stuck doors.

As long as the public can be persuaded to take this in, BR's public relations has achieved the desired blame-transference. And the worse the chaos, the greater the PR success for this ploy. The more trains are cancelled, the more the public will be inclined to believe that with the best will in the world BR has at last been defeated by an astonishing freak of the weather.

Had the network been brought to a standstill by 12-foot drifts at Borough Market Junction and avalanches in Stratford East there would be some excuse. But rail minister Roger Freeman was right to sound thoroughly unsympathetic towards BR's snow performance in Parliament yesterday. Stuck doors, iced-up points and broken motors are all too mechanically mundane; only a wimp would blame the snow for being fluffy. Clever PR is a lot easier than designing in precautions against a natural minor hazard which occurs regularly. And it would be cheaper than repairing them afterwards while driving their passengers to despair.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 071-782 5000

Time to resume Ulster internment?

From Major General A. S. Jeapes

Sir, The reason internment failed in the 1970s, as described in Conor Cruise O'Brien's article ("No more pussy-footing: hit the IRA", February 9), was that the security forces did not know how to intern. Police files were hopelessly out of date. Many who had at some time in the past had association with a terrorist organisation were picked up and put inside for good measure. Some were indeed active terrorists; but many were not.

The resultant feeling of injustice within the republican community caused rioting and reaction throughout the province, and undoubtedly helped IRA recruiting. It is partly the fear of a repetition of that disorder that inhibits the reintroduction of internment now.

But the position today is quite different. As Commander Land Forces, Northern Ireland (1985-7), I knew just who the top terrorists were. The only trouble was that the evidence could not be produced in court, because to do so would betray our informants and in effect write their death warrants. Interning these top terrorists would reduce the level of terrorism markedly; be in no doubt about that.

The crucial question is whether the military advantage outweighs the political fallout of detaining people without trial and the international criticism that would attract. It may be, as Conor Cruise O'Brien advocates, that the time has come. There would certainly be no years shed in the security forces, but it is not a decision to take lightly.

Yours faithfully,
A. S. JEAPES,
Army and Navy Club,
Fall Mall, SW1,
February 9.

Dilemma of Jordan in the Gulf war

From the Chaplain of the Jordan Chaplaincy

Sir, The reaction of the White House to King Hussein's recent speech (report, February 7) calling for a cease-fire in the Gulf confirms the suspicions of many people in this area, that America seeks not friends in the region, but clients. A friend may admonish, warn, advise, even if the advice seems unpalatable. (Pope John Paul, to whom the king referred, has used the same warning tone.) Not so a client. And it is in this former way of reading the situation that His Majesty's speech needs to be seen.

Doubtless, there was in the king's speech more than one message for more than one audience, but a clear tone throughout the speech was the inheritance of Arab history and culture. It is significant that he referred to monuments of Arab civilisation in Iraq as being the Iraq known by all Arabs. He made not one reference to President Saddam Hussein, making a nonsense of American suggestions that Jordan is now firmly in Saddam Hussein's "camp". To read the king's speech in this light is to revert to the cross "goodies and baddies" scenario which characterised the early Reagan years.

Yet more cross has been the American threat to withhold aid for Jordan for 1991 (report, February 8). Why be surprised in the Arab world's only democracy if the head of state articulates the feelings of the mass of the people, especially in the light of recent Jordanian deaths on the Baghdad-Amman highway? According to American lights it is democracies, especially fragile ones, which deserve encouragement and support. It is hard for Jordanians to understand the curious double-speak here, that democracies may only be encouraged if they voice no criticism of the American administration.

Yours faithfully,
WILLIAM TAYLOR, Chaplain,
The Jordan Chaplaincy,
PO Box 598,
Amman, Jordan,
February 9.

Demise of 'Encounter'

From Dr D. J. O'Keefe

Sir, Professor Alan Ryan's glowing article on the demise of *Encounter* (February 2) reveals precisely those attitudes which *Encounter* opposed. Ryan's central claim, that anti-communism is historically redundant, is manifestly false. If Western intellectuals had been consistently opposed to communism, then this particular menace to the human race would have collapsed long ago.

Ryan seems strangely indifferent to Mao or Pol Pot. Perhaps he also thinks the Soviets did not corrupt the United Nations or encourage the spread of quasi-communism and other totalitarian mutations in the Third World. They did just that, though, creating war and starvation, not in some remembered phase of history, but now.

The giveaway words are "hybrid anti-communism." World Professor Ryan accuses anyone of being "hybridly anti-Neo." The truth is that even someone not present enough to be revolted by the theory of Marxist socialism, ought to be appalled by the practice. "Hybridism" is just a smear-substitute for justified revision.

Encounter also did admirable work in combating the sub-totalitarian trends in Western education systems. It is the promotion of intellectually disreputable and destructive campaigns like "multiculturalism" that truly merits the word "hybridism."

All his readers and contributors owe a debt to Melvin Lasky and his colleagues. Let us hope that his friend Arthur Koestler was right that those who were reviled by lesser men will one day be vindicated in the historical memory. Meanwhile the old *trahison* flourishes, and if

Attack at No 10

From Mr C. E. Payne

Sir, The item in last Saturday's *Times* Diary on the possibility of a cabinet and no prime minister omits one important, and perhaps for many recent prime ministers, appealing alternative — that is, a prime minister and no cabinet. Indeed, when Wellington took over in 1834 after King William IV dismissed Lord Melbourne, he took into his own hands all the important posts, the home office, the foreign office, the treasury, and war, and the colonies.

He appointed Lord Lyndhurst as lord chancellor and Lord Denman as chancellor of the exchequer and decided to dispense with the others. The Duke was seen dashing around Whitehall from office to office. Thus, it was said, there was at last "a united government," and "the ministers are all of one mind."

The constitutional propriety of this I leave to others; but it must have been a tempting precedent for some of the recent incumbents.

Yours truly,
CHARLES E. PAYNE,
Albion Fine Art,
8 Monmouth Road, W2,
February 10.

Ebb or flow

From Mr M. G. Harman

Sir, Corollis force only acts, surely, when something is already moving (letters, February 4), so it would not have any effect on the London water ring main unless there were already some circulation. Otherwise it would cause spontaneous circulation in any large lake (and even make stirring one's tea superfluous, at any rate theoretically).

Might this force, however, be part of the explanation for the lamentable performance of our cricketers in Australia? It acts transversely, in opposite directions in the two hemispheres. Our players may be so used to the ball deviating to the left, as it does in the northern hemisphere, that they find the antipodean rightward Corollis swerve unnatural and unnerving.

Yours sincerely,
MICHAEL HARMAN,
Holmwood,
37 Upper Park Road,
Cambridge, Surrey,
February 4.

Amateur choirs

From Mr Peter Davies

Sir, The decision by Greater London Arts to stop supporting amateur music societies (Arts Briefing, February 4) is a major blow to the musical life of the capital, and in particular the fine choirs which these societies support. Given the shortage of adequate concert halls in London, amateur choirs are rarely in a position to offer enough seats to the paying public to cover their full costs.

Most of their deficit is covered by the singers' own subscriptions, but grants, particularly those from GLA, have in the past enabled them to take the risk of performing new and exciting modern choral works before an audience that would otherwise hear only the familiar repertoire.

I hope that whoever takes up the role of Greater London Arts will not ignore the importance of amateur musicians with professional standards.

Yours faithfully,
PETER DAVIES,
Bramble Corner,
70 St Mary's Road,
Long Ditton,
Surrey,
February 4.

Squaring speeds

From Mr Alex Bainbridge

Sir, Your editorial (February 8) discussing the relevance to motorway speed limits of kinetic energy (the determining factor in stopping distances and crash damage) caught my eye as I was revising for my A-level physics exam. As I grappled with the complexities of Newtonian mechanics I paused to consider whether any lorry drivers know their mechanics better than chief police officers or indeed your paper. I am only a learner driver, but surely the formula is: kinetic energy = $\frac{1}{2}mv^2$.

Yours sincerely,
ALEX BAINBRIDGE,
Upper Shoobash Farm,
Nr Romsey, Hampshire.

Actors in public life

From Mr Ian Flintoff

Sir, Simon Tait, commenting on my decision not to stand as General Secretary of Equity (report, February 1), omits to mention that the idea never occurred to me — for the simple reason that I am an actor. Equity (along with all other arts organisations) requires skilled and experienced administrators and negotiators in order to thrive in the modern world. I am neither.

However, Mr Tait's report raises a much broader issue. I believe there to be a certain diffidence among those who work in the arts in Britain which deters them from being truly active in society and politics — unlike countries as different as the United States and Czechoslovakia, where even heads of state may emerge from the performing arts.

Performers in Britain who are conspicuous and articulate in poli-

From Mr Chris August

Sir, It is unfortunate that Jordanian drivers of oil tankers have been killed on the road between Baghdad and Amman in air raids by the coalition forces.

However, what does not seem to have been noted in reports is that, because of the sanctions on Iraq imposed by the Security Council, these drivers have in fact been aiding sanctions breaking, and are therefore not necessarily totally innocent victims as suggested by Señor Javier Pérez de Cuellar and others.

Yours faithfully,
CHRIS AUGUST,
8 Trevanion Road, W14.

From Professor R. W. Carrall

Sir, Of all the statements involved in the Gulf crisis, few can match the consistent dignity and compassion shown by King Hussein and the Crown Prince of Jordan. Their people are kin of the hapless Iraqis and have also been daily witnesses and victims, just across the Jordan, of 40 years of transgressions of the UN charter.

In these circumstances the statements from Amman show restraint and their language compares well with the callous euphemisms of the coalition spokesmen with their "collateral damage" and yesterday on radio, most gross of all, the description of Iraq as a "target-rich environment" for bombers.

Now King Hussein has spoken out against the intensive bombing and in doing so did no more, to my mind, than echo the reaction of the Secretary General of the UN and describe events we have all seen on television. As a consequence, the US is today threatening to withdraw its aid of some £40 million a year to Jordan whilst at the same time considering increasing by billions the billions of dollars it already gives to Israel.

The hypocrisy of it all is sickening and, sadly, we are all accomplices.

Yours faithfully,
ROBIN CARRELL,
Trinity College, Cambridge.

Protecting pigs

From Mr Neil Danson

Sir, The following percentages represent the proportion of UK sows that have been kept free range in recent years: 1982 1.5; 1986 5; 1990 13. Projections for the next decade go up to 25 per cent in 1995. They are presumably what Joanne Bower (February 6) means by "the few exceptions", amongst pig farmers, who are adopting high standards of welfare for their animals. For an industry that has a lot of capital invested in buildings and fixed equipment the speed with which new techniques have been adopted, in response to consumer demand, is all but amazing.

British livestock farmers lead the EC in their standards of animal welfare; welcome as the impending ban on sow stalls is, it should be accompanied by a ban on the import of piglets that has been produced in conditions that would be illegal in this country; that would be fair for the pig, fair for the farmer, and fair for the customer.

Yours faithfully,
NEIL DANSON,
Glebe Farm,
Spelsbury, Oxford,
February 6.

Aid for Baltic states

From Mr Michael J. Cooke

Sir, Your leading article "Gorbachev versus Yeltsin" (February 6) says that "without blatant interference in Moscow's quarrels, the West can direct technical aid to the places which will make best use of it, bypassing the Kremlin".

I have some experience over recent months in trying to bring technical aid to the Baltic states. Leaving aside governments, the response in "the West" is virtually non-existent. Investors are not prepared to provide share capital, bankers see no security within the Baltics, business managers are too preoccupied with recession.

To provide technical aid requires a financial commitment from the Western business community in the full knowledge that such investments will require a long-term involvement. Sadly, money is more important to the West than the bodies in the streets of Vilnius and Riga, a fact of life well understood by the Kremlin.

Yours faithfully,
M. COOKE,
Whin Rigg House,
Borrowoop Lane,
Lichfield, Staffordshire,
February 6.

Adverse conditions

From Mr David Ingram

Sir, On Thursday, Friday and over the weekend I was urged to travel only if necessary. Examples given were urgent medical grounds or helping the aged.

On Sunday morning I was accused on the radio of being a wimp if I had not made it to work on Thursday or Friday.

Yours,
DAVID INGRAM,
31 Stormont Road,
Highgate, N6,
February 11.

Letters to the editor should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be sent to a fax number — (071 782 5046).



Smoothly down the slippery slope

The people riding an inverted fibreglass bath down London's snow-covered hills last Sunday earned full marks for enterprise, if not for design. They were not alone, however, when it came to finding imaginative alternatives to the traditional toboggan.

Racing alongside the bath there was an ancient Volkswagen bonnet, a freezer lid, a wok, a zimmer frame, plastic bread crates, tin trays, fertiliser bags, several broken suitcases and a "Footpath Closed" sign with the front bent upwards.

While the style of toboggans has altered dramatically over the past 20 years, few experts could have visualised the extremes of initiative exhibited on London's slopes apart from, perhaps, the Eskimos, who produced their own form of sledge by using frozen salmon as runners in the absence of any other suitable material.

Certainly, the prehistoric men who built the first vehicle on two runners to carry themselves across the snow would have found it hard to imagine their idea would eventually spawn the brightly coloured, plastic teatray-style toboggans which are currently dotted over Britain's snowy slopes.

Despite the still lively demand for the familiar wooden Davos sledges, which originated in Switzerland and now sell for between £25 and £35 for one or two-seaters, it is the new, space-age, state-of-the-art toboggans which currently dominate the market. And although they may not have the same aesthetic appeal to the purists, in design terms the plastic toboggans are far more practical and effective on Britain's

Traditional sledges have melted from the shops, but snow is the mother of invention, Sally Brompton says

sporadically snow-covered slopes.

The toboggans — round or elongated, with or without brakes and steering, and ranging in price from £3 to £15 for the basic range (more for those with Lillywhites stocked at £50 until they sold out) — originated in Finland and are cheaper, faster and, arguably, safer than their wooden predecessors. Arguably, because although they can reach far higher speeds than the Davos, the rider is closer to the ground and is less likely to be thrown on to his or her head. They are also built to slide over the snow rather than dig into it, which the Davos, with its metal runners, is inclined to do.

"Wooden sledges which are built for a hard, icy surface don't go very well on the snowy fields of Britain, because the snow is generally too soft or wet," says Terry Denton, the managing director of Abco's Playthings, based in Cheshire, who began importing the wooden sledges from Austria and Germany about 25 years ago.

Mr Denton introduced the Finnish plastic dish sledge into Britain ten years ago. He says: "It really caught on because it was much more suitable for the climatic conditions in this country, and

much more economically priced. Then, as with all good things, many other people latched on to the idea. There was a lot of ripping off of people's designs and British manufacturers started producing plastic sledges for half the price." Mr Denton dropped out of the toboggan market altogether about four years ago, after the last widespread snowfall in Britain.

While acknowledging that the plastic sledges are safer, he admits the wooden ones "look much nicer, and I'm sure all the in-people and yuppies prefer them because they like to be seen on them. You now find a lot of people trying to copy the design of the Davos in plastic."

The fact that plastic sledges can split "if hammered a bit" means there is a replacement market for them, according to Mr Denton. Finding a toboggan at all at the moment is almost impossible. Nasty scenes have been witnessed by shop assistants, such as the one in Patrick's Toys and Games shop in Fulham, southwest London, last Saturday when two respectable middle-aged women nearly resorted to violence over who should be sold the last remaining plastic sledge in the shop.

There were similar scenes over the last wooden ones, according to the shop's owner, Nicholas Campbell-White. "On each occasion, it's been mothers or fathers — there have been no children involved," says Mr Campbell-White, whose family has sold sledges in the shop since it opened in 1948. Last week, with one of the largest permanent stocks of toboggans in London, he sold out his entire stock of 200 within three days.



Slid row: taking a side-saddle approach to the modernist, plastic route



Standing room only: traditionalists favour the wooden Davos toboggan

Creaming off the jersey herds

How 'leisure shirt appeal' put paid to the classic on a footballer's back

WHY are footballers' jerseys so horrible? Why do players mostly look as if they are running around wearing suits made of greaseproof paper? Liverpool's current away jersey is a good example, its metallic grey colour giving the team an especially over-ready appearance.

John Robinson is the chief designer at Umbro International's research and development plant in Macclesfield, Cheshire. Umbro makes the kit for the Scotland, England, Northern Ireland and Wales national teams, as well as for many top league clubs.

Mr Robinson lays an Aston Villa jersey of 1962 on his desk. It is in the traditional Villa colours of deep maroon with light blue sleeves. The material is pure cotton, heavy but soft to the touch. It looks a lovely jersey, a classic jersey. "Fabrics have moved on quite

Umbro's that the design should change often, and be commercially attractive.

Take the current Leeds United jersey, seen frequently on television recently thanks to the club's FA Cup matches with Arsenal and Sunday's televised League Cup game against Manchester United. When Howard Wilkinson took over as the Leeds manager, he decided he wanted to return to an all-white kit. But white is a problem for Mr Robinson: it is difficult to generate interest and sales in white. "What we came up with," he says, "was a Jacquard surface detail, a flat neck collar with a leisure shirt

kind of appeal to it, and a sleeve detail picking up on the club badge colours."

Unfortunately, this jersey will not be on view during the FA Cup replay at Highbury scheduled for tomorrow night, because Leeds will probably be wearing their yellow away jerseys. From Mr Robinson's point of view the away kit is an even better opportunity to generate interest and sales; because it is less restricted by tradition, he is given a freer hand. He is very proud, for instance, of the new purple, red and white away jersey he has designed for Scotland — and of the enormous shorts that go with it. "We are going much more continental, with the longer shorts," he says.

CALLUM MURRAY

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The away kit is an even better opportunity to generate sales

dramatically since this," says Mr Robinson dismissively. "The modern material is 100 per cent polyester."

According to Mr Robinson, the only advantage of a natural material such as cotton was that it would keep you warm on a dry day. On a wet day, it would absorb about 25 per cent of its own weight in moisture. More importantly, though, cotton "had no drape to it, it just clung to the body".

Why should this matter? Because the design of football jerseys today is driven, not by what the footballer wants to play in, but by what the eight-year-old changing out of his school clothes or the 18-year-old setting out for the pub wants to be seen in.

The football jersey, Mr Robinson says, is now a "leisure product", and the replica market in league and national team jerseys dictates what those jerseys will look like. Typically, Umbro will sign a contract to supply jerseys to a club for, say, a five-year period, with provision for changing the design every one or two years. Clubs receive a royalty on every replica jersey sold, so it is in their interest as well as



Gordon Strachan of Leeds kind of appeal to it, and a sleeve detail picking up on the club badge colours.

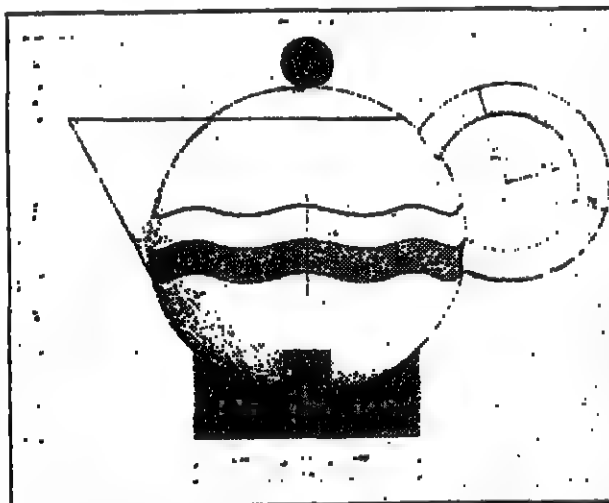
Architecture at the dinner table

Can the people who design buildings also design coffee pots, candlesticks and cutlery?

IN 1982 Nan Swid and Addie Powell, two American women working for the furniture maker Knoll International, decided that the home accessories industry in the United States was moribund. So Ms Swid, a design director, and Ms Powell, the vice president of sales, decided to form a company and commission leading international architects to design some original modernistic tableware.

Today, Swid Powell's products are sold in 500 American stores, distributed throughout Canada, Japan and much of Europe, and will go on sale in Britain this summer, via such outlets as Conran, Joseph and Osgel. The prototypes of many of its pieces are on permanent display in the New York museum of modern art, while the cream of its products feature in a glossy art book, *Swid Powell: Objects by Architects*, by Annette Tapert (Thames and Hudson, £24). Is all the fuss justified?

Firstly, the pair must be praised for taking the idea beyond the drawing board, for although it is stated in the book that the US "tabletop industry" (as America has it) was dead on its feet, it is not at all clear that this was the case. Indeed, it could be argued that during the Eighties the quality and choice of tableware had never been higher or more expensive. However, there lurks in the text an undertone to suggest that while the expensive stuff on offer tended to antique repro, the



Big Dripper: Michael Graves's drawing for his coffee-maker

sleeker modern artefacts were frankly too cheap. Even this premise may be shaky, as a glance of the produce of, say, Alessi, Rosenthal or David Mellor reveals. Certainly neither woman imagined she was doing anything so humdrum as commissioning a load of dishes at the first meeting of the selected architects, we are told, they "hired a photographer to immortalise the event; they knew it would be historic".

All was not plain sailing, however: the firm of Gwathmey Siegel sent a model of a bowl to be made in crystal, but "it was so geometrically driven that even our cabinet maker couldn't make it in plastic, and it cost us \$1,000 to make a paper model. Not only couldn't you make a mould for it, you couldn't have got it out of the mould". Stanley Tigerman, meanwhile, "arrived with a candelabra that used four different materials — a manufacturing impossibility". Eventually dinner sets, goblets, candlesticks and other items began to roll off the

production line. On the evidence of the elegant photographs in the book, the quality of manufacture is high, but how does the stuff stand up to the self-invited comparison with the glories of the Arts and Crafts movement, the Wiener Werkstätte or the Bauhaus? It chivalrously compares quite well, but largely because much of it is strikingly similar.

The best-selling line is Gwathmey Siegel's "tuxedo" dinner service — white circular plates overprinted with small black squares à la Josef Hoffmann. And Richard Meier's silver-plated fruit bowls and candlesticks are as near to straightforward Hoffmann reproductions as it would be possible to go without incurring law suits. Michael Graves (he of the Alessi kettle with the plastic twenty bird on the spout) comes up with china that is midway between Thirties Shelley pottery and Clarice Cliff, whereas Robert Venturi plunders all sources from Fifties kitsch to Sixties pop and debased classicism, with a nod towards Lego.

Etienne Sottsass contributes

some witty things, as ever, but they are no different to much of his design for his own Memphis group; Robert A.M. Stern swings between pure art deco and such things as an ice bucket in the form of a Doric temple (why this should be more tasteful than an ice bucket masquerading as a plastic pineapple might be discernible only to the fortunate few). Some things are lovely, and truly original: Mr Tigerman's fluted cookie jar is outstanding, and so is Paolo Portoghesi's "eclipse" service, its borders enveloped in Venetian facades.

The paucity of true innovation is a disappointment, but the quality and high degree of finish displayed in each of the pieces goes a long way to compensate, and ultimately I suppose we should be grateful to Swid and Powell for offering us design on a plate.

JOSEPH CONNOLLY

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Glenda Jackson in the March

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We have a new home — a generous gift which will help us to look after more elderly people. It is a happy place — a real Friends of the Elderly home from home.

Please help us to provide for the many aspects of care and attention so important to the old and frail. Many of us lead longer, contented lives today but for some there is an unacceptable price to pay in loneliness and need.

We have been looking after the elderly since 1905 and now have twelve residential homes. Here men and women from professional backgrounds find security and freedom for the rest of their lives, with nursing care when needed. Friends of the Elderly also give financial help to old people from all backgrounds who wish to stay in their own homes.

We all face old age, one way or another. Ours is a cause very near to home. Please be a Friend and make a covenant or remember us in your will.

Write today with a donation and enquiry to:

The General Secretary,
Friends of the Elderly
(Dept. T) 42 Ebury Street,
LONDON SW1W 0LZ.
Registered charity number: 226064

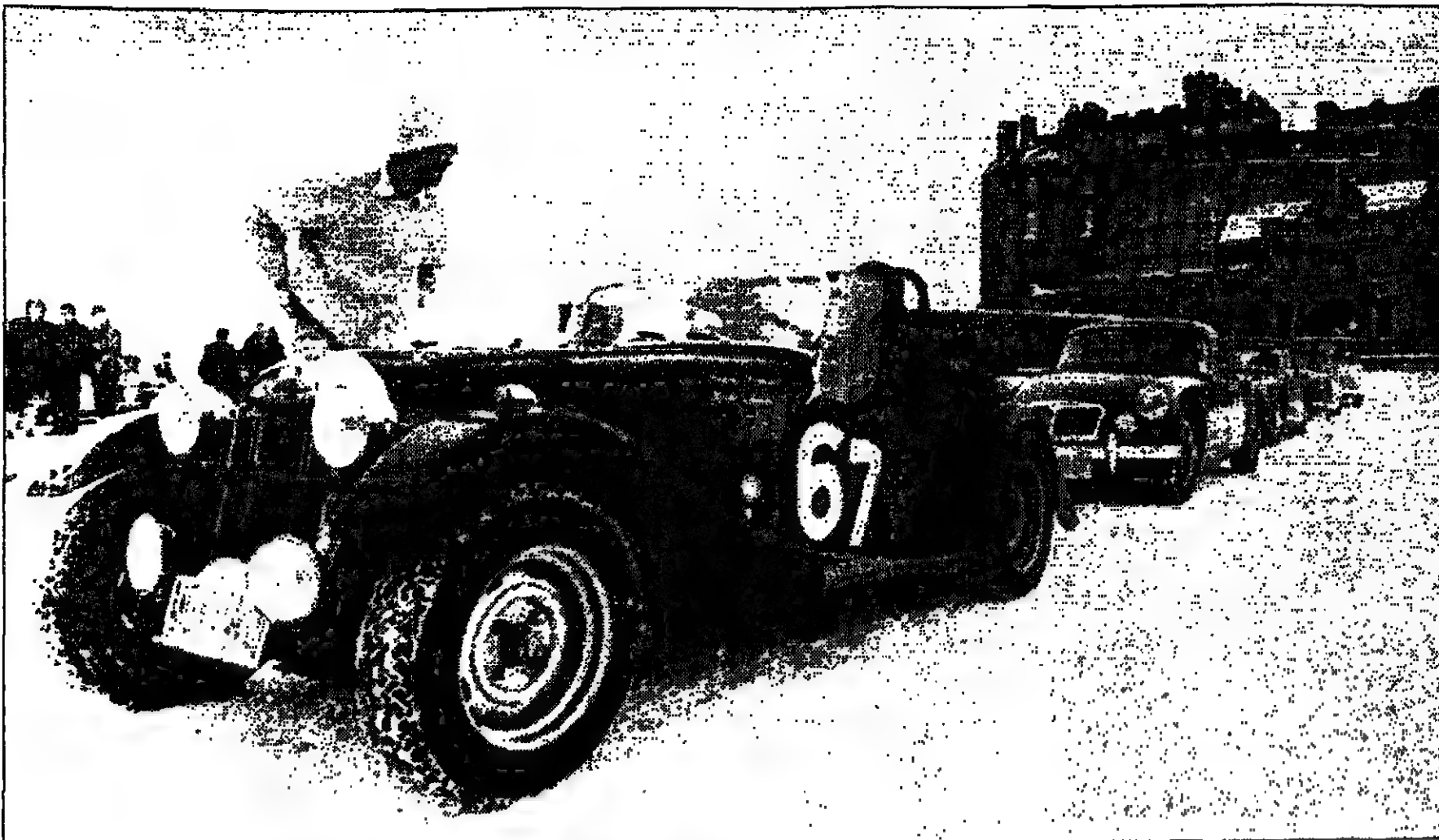
FRIENDS OF THE ELDERLY
and Gentefolk's help

6.00 **Cosfax**
6.30 **BBC Breakfast News** with Nicholas Witchell and Laurie Meyer
8.55 **Daytime UK** presented by Judi Siders and Tim Grundy in Birmingham and Adrian Mills with David Jones in Manchester
9.00 **News**, regional news and weather 9.05 **Kilroy**, Robert Kilroy-Gill, a discussion on whether the British are giving enough support to the conflict in the Gulf 9.50 **Dish of the Day**, Cookery hints from Rosamund Moon
10.00 **News**, regional news and weather 10.05 **Children's BBC**, introduced by Andi Peters, begins with Playdays 10.25 **The Bump**, cartoon 10.35 **Going for Gold** (r)
11.00 **News**, regional news and weather 11.05 **People Today**, George Robertson and boyfriends are included today. Plus Health UK, in which Mary Lewis investigates the pressure being put on the food industry to reduce the provision of food for our consumption
12.00 **News**, regional news and weather 12.05 **Rosemary Conley's Diet and Fitness Club**, energetic exercises designed to help you lose weight and lose weight 12.20 **Scene Today**, Peetie Maff's five daily entertainment show, with Jack Spiers and Tim Grundy 12.55 **Regional news and weather**

1.00 **One O'Clock News** with Mary Lewis. Weather 1.05 **Neighbours**, (Cassini) 1.50 **Going for Gold**
2.15 **Film: New Faces of 1937** (1937, b/w), Joe Penner and Milton Beldy star in this comedy and dance extravaganza which is based upon the same idea used to great effect in Mel Brook's *The Producers*. Directed by Leigh Jason. Northern Ireland: Open House, 3.00 **Best of British** 3.25 **The Fiddlers**, Simon Pegg's metal good use of household junk with the help of children from Black Country Primary School, Lancashire 4.05 **Holkey Wolf**, cartoon 4.15 **Jackpot**, Bernard Holey with part two of *Jonny Briggs and the Junior Tennis*, by Joan Eadington 4.25 **Quick-Draw McGraw**, cartoon 4.35 **The Really Wild Show**, Nature series from, the week, wacky Wales, (Cassini)
5.00 **Newsround** 5.10 **Grange Hill**, Episode 11 of the children's drama set in a London comprehensive school, (Cassini)
5.25 **Neighbours** (r), (Cassini) Northern Ireland: Inside Ulster 5.30 **St. O'Clock News** with Peter Sissons and Chris Lowe. Weather 5.35 **Regional News**, Northern Ireland: Neighbours
7.00 **Holiday '91** presented by Anne Grogan and Eamonn Holmes. Kathy Taylor has the trail deep in North American cowboy country, tennis star Chris Evert has a special report on ballooning in Aspen, Colorado, and there is news of holidaying in Florence and cruising on the California Canal, (Cassini)
7.30 **Newsround**, (Cassini)
8.00 **Dad's Army**, More classic comedy from the boys defending Warrington-on-Sea (r), (Cassini)
8.30 **A Question of Sport** presented by David Coleman. This week: Bill Beaumont and Ian Botham are joined by Colin Jackson, Ian Wootton, Tony Brown and Peter Dinkley
9.00 **Nine O'Clock News** with Mary Lewis. (Cassini) Regional news and weather
9.30 **Spender**, Dance, Girl, Dance, Spender (Jimmy Nail) becomes the hippest detective in the northeast. Completes with smart suits and smart lines as he shapes up to tackle crime in his own backwoods way. Tonight he is in pursuit of a shady night-club owner who is suspected of employing under-age dancers in his clubs and supplying them to even more dubious establishments in Barcelona. Wales: *Week in Week Out* 10.00-10.55 **Spender** (Cassini)

10.25 **Film 81** with Barry Norman. Includes reviews of *Miller's Crossing* and *The Field* and Barry Norman's predictions for the year's Oscar nominations, due to be announced tomorrow. Northern Ireland: 10.55 **Film: Beverly Hills Connection** (1985) starring James Brown and Lisa Harner. A female detective comes into Beverly Hills from out of town to investigate a friend's murder. She is shocked when her investigations uncover the scandalous lifestyle led by her deceased friend. With David Hemmings. Directed by Corey Allen (Cassini) Northern Ireland: Open House 11.40-12.10 **Film 81** 12.25 **Weather**, Wales: *Week in Week Out* 12.55 **News** and weather

ANGLIA
As London except 8.00pm-8.30pm. Includes: 8.00 **Home and Away** 8.30-9.00 **Anglia News** 9.00-9.30 **Anglia News** 9.30-10.00 **Anglia News** 10.00-10.30 **Anglia News** 10.30-11.00 **Anglia News** 11.00-11.30 **Anglia News** 11.30-12.00 **Anglia News** 12.00-12.30 **Anglia News** 12.30-1.00 **Anglia News** 1.00-1.30 **Anglia News** 1.30-2.00 **Anglia News** 2.00-2.30 **Anglia News** 2.30-3.00 **Anglia News** 3.00-3.30 **Anglia News** 3.30-4.00 **Anglia News** 4.00-4.30 **Anglia News** 4.30-5.00 **Anglia News** 5.00-5.30 **Anglia News** 5.30-6.00 **Anglia News** 6.00-6.30 **Anglia News** 6.30-7.00 **Anglia News** 7.00-7.30 **Anglia News** 7.30-8.00 **Anglia News** 8.00-8.30 **Anglia News** 8.30-9.00 **Anglia News** 9.00-9.30 **Anglia News** 9.30-10.00 **Anglia News** 10.00-10.30 **Anglia News** 10.30-11.00 **Anglia News** 11.00-11.30 **Anglia News** 11.30-12.00 **Anglia News** 12.00-12.30 **Anglia News** 12.30-1.00 **Anglia News** 1.00-1.30 **Anglia News** 1.30-2.00 **Anglia News** 2.00-2.30 **Anglia News** 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Cold start: entrants in this year's Monte Carlo rally for classic cars gathered beneath Edinburgh Castle yesterday for the first stage of the 1,800 miles to Monaco

MPs voice anger over BR service

Continued from page 1

Although rain tends to run off engine casings, snow can find its way into the most inaccessible crevices. "It was extremely fine snow, and it simply got everywhere," British Rail said.

In addition, a number of small engine fires developed in Network SouthEast's multiple-unit trains because only one of the units was picking up current. The operating unit's motors were doing the work of two or more units, which resulted in overloading. Engineers are also working on ways of improving water drainage inside carriages after British Rail was forced to withdraw dozens of trains because of frozen doors.

Christopher Butler, Tory MP for Warrington South, protested that connections between London and the North-West seemed unable to cope with cold weather even when it was predicted. Roger Freeman, minister for public transport, promised to draw British Rail's attention to MPs' comments. Mr Freeman said although the problems related to rolling stock, he shared the concern that British Rail should find itself in this position, with relatively modern rolling stock.

Services are not expected to return to normal for a few days and British Rail will concentrate its services on those lines where demand is greatest.

Recession forces airlines to hold unofficial ticket 'sale'

By HARVEY ELLIOTT, AIR CORRESPONDENT

AIR fares to hundreds of popular business and holiday destinations are at their lowest level for years as major airlines dump thousands of unsold tickets on travel agents in an attempt to sell them at almost any price. The effect has been to create a bonanza for those passengers prepared to travel within the next few months.

Among the offers appearing in almost every High Street travel agency, as well as the traditional "bucket shop" outlet, are New York for £185 return compared with a standard economy fare of £658, Amsterdam for £70 return compared with the normal scheduled economy price of £226 or Paris for £69 compared with a Eurobudget fare of £188 return.

Almost every large airline is involved in the unofficial seat "sale" although they are forbidden from advertising them because every fare has to be approved formally by the governments at both ends of the route.

A big drop in passengers which has led to many airlines flying with well under half their seats filled, has forced the price-cutting war which is threatening to undermine the whole structure of internationally agreed fares.

Mr Riaz Dooley, who runs Travel Bazaar — three London

based "bucket" shops — said yesterday: "They are all offering tickets for whatever price they can get." He said that he could offer tickets immediately to almost any destination. British Airways tickets to New York were selling at £185 return, TWA to Frankfurt was £75 instead of the normal economy price of £292 and the Rumanian airline Tarom was even taking passengers to Bangkok for £360 return compared with the normal economy fare of £1,244.

Unijet, which specialises in consolidating groups into one aircraft, was selling Virgin Atlantic tickets to Los Angeles for £312 and Continental to New York for £193. A one week holiday in Miami, without hotel accommodation but with a hire car thrown in will cost £269.

Tour operators are able to get even better deals from the airlines by buying in bulk. Thomson is offering city breaks involving two or three night stays in three star hotels in Lisbon, for example, for £149 although the full economy return air fare alone is £352. The most popular destination being offered by Thomson, however, is Jamaica where an all inclusive 14-night holiday with every meal and drink and all entertainment already paid for is £1,129. The

standard return economy fare to Jamaica is £1,616.

Technically, selling charter seats to a tour operator is not governed by the regulations and the airlines do not have to reveal, even to the passenger, what they are charging. It is clear, however, that they are practically giving away seats in an attempt to get some measure of return, however small.

If their tickets are sold direct to the public they should be formally approved by the Civil Aviation Authority which said last night: "Our intention is to ensure that there is a basic on demand fare which is cost related. We do not, of course, have any control over the price that travel agents sell tickets for and as far as we know they are selling them at a loss. Anyone who buys such a ticket should be aware, however, that there may be pitfalls. There may be many restrictions attached to the tickets or they may even turn up at the airport to find that the flight has been cancelled and their tickets are not valid."

The airlines often try to pretend that their tickets do not find their way to "bucket" shops, although British Airways admitted last night: "We do have some tickets with consolidators." In one legitimate move yesterday BA an-

nounced that it was planning to cut 33 per cent from the lowest priced Apex fares to London which were bought in America for travel between April and October. The move is designed to woo back the thousands of American tourists who have cancelled their plans to visit Europe because of terrorism fears in the wake of the Gulf war.

The fares are, however, "subject to government approval". If, as expected, they do get official blessing they are almost certain to be matched by rival carriers.

BA jobs at risk, page 20

Deng would use troops on Hong Kong

Continued from page 1

He also made it clear, in a statement calculated to crush hopes that China might take a more liberal view of pluralist politics in future, that democracy activists would be thrown out of government when the British colony reverts to Chinese rule.

The 86-year-old patriarch's attack, reported in *The Wide Angle*, a pro-China Hong Kong magazine, was made during a recent behind-the-scenes meeting of se-

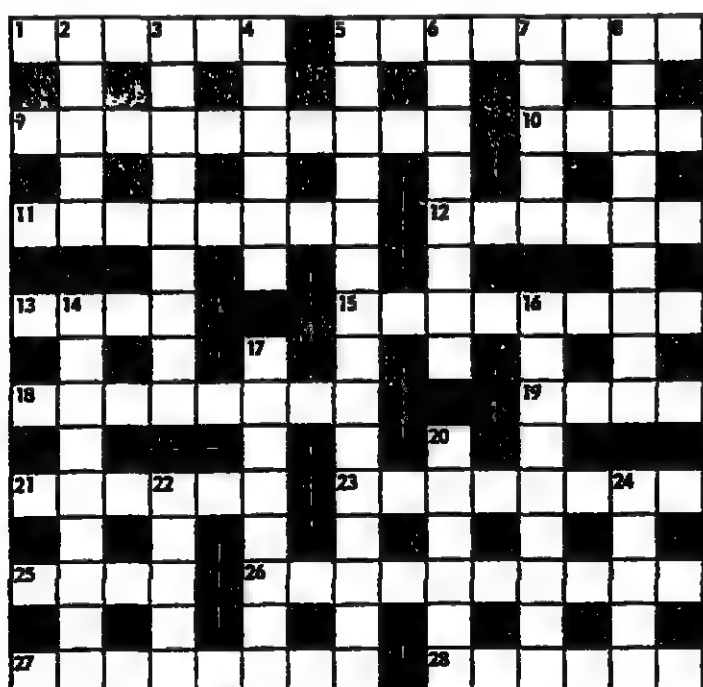
nior members of the Chinese communist party. It was a direct reminder to Hong Kong that China will use force, just as the Soviet leadership has done in Lithuania, if it steps out of line.

The report comes a week after a Hong Kong rally in which demonstrators burned a mock Chinese constitution to protest at the jailing of dissident and democracy leaders in Peking. The article also follows a tirade against subversives in the magazine last month

and a call from Mr Deng and Jiang Zemin, his protégé and the party chairman, to be "harsh if circumstances demand harshness".

"The opposition party which organised the alliance in support of democracy has to be kicked out of the political establishment," Mr Deng says in the present issue. "It is impossible for them to take up key posts in the special administrative region government because they burned the Chinese constitution and the basic law."

THE TIMES CROSSWORD PUZZLE NO 18,527



- ACROSS**
- Unpaid — our Queen, for example (6).
 - Taking tea with dictator's companion (8).
 - What's left behind, fate treats badly (5-5).
 - Instant credit (4).
 - In accordance with the facts, the book found it justified a trial (4,4).
 - East End composer's journey (6).
 - A go-getter, beginning to be impatient (4).
 - Might the full complement appear? (8).
 - Cap to wear with a loud birth-day suit? (8).
 - Foreign money no longer adjusted for inflation (4).
 - Lady with a liberal temper (6).

Solution to Puzzle No 18,526

READE PALATABLE
E T L E A A A R
DALLIANCE MACON
S A M M W P K A I
TOSTI AVALANCHE
A M C B I S T R O I E
T O P L A C E D I S T R O I E
B A L L I N T H E M A S H E D
P L U M B O E R A L
P L U M B O E R A L
S T A N Y O A D O S
E X I S T A C I T A T O R S
S A N D S T O N E D E R B Y

- DOWN**
- Male following female church supporter (8).
 - This fellow shot an arrow into the air (4).
 - Drink cures heart failure (10).
 - Inaccurate claim to be fit (8).
 - By far the longest pleasure for Byron (6).
 - Make as if to bid (5).
 - Too anxious about advancing years in bowling (4-5).
 - Keep the army in control (6).
 - Visionary projects here or in France (7,2,3,3).
 - A true rep works to create an opening (8).
 - More than usually wide, possibly (5).
 - Change to second, or the car stalls, perhaps (9).
 - Grassy space to accommodate players (5-4).
 - Direction to put end to flirtation, or the way to keep a wife (5-4).
 - Row reported over explosive headgear (5-3).
 - Short burst of song succeeded — informally, naturally! (6).
 - Raise flag of French king (5).
 - Mould lies under a part of the church (5).

Concise crossword, page 13

WORD-WATCHING

A daily safari through the language jungle. Which of the possible definitions is correct?

By Philip Howard

CLASSICS

MELEAGER

a. An Athenian general
b. A Syrian epigrammatist
c. A lost tragedy by Aeschylus

THRASIA

a. The Minc of Comedy
b. A republic in Sicily
c. An underworld goddess

CYSELUS

a. Ancient after-dinner darts
b. A Corinthian tyrant
c. A trochaic trimeter

GADES

a. The underworld
b. A Lydian tyrant
c. A Phoenician colony

Answers on page 16

AA ROADWATCH

For the latest AA traffic and roadworks information, 24 hours a day, dial 0836 401 followed by the appropriate code.

London & SE traffic, roadworks

C. London (within N & S Circles) 731

M-ways/roads M4-M1 732

M-ways/roads M1-Dartford 733

M-ways/roads Dartford-T-M23 734

M-ways/roads M23-M4 735

M25 London Orbital only 736

Northern Ireland

National traffic and roadworks

National motorways 737

West Country 738

Wales 739

Midlands 740

East Angles 741

North-west England 742

North-east England 743

Scotland 744

Northern Ireland 745

AA Roadwatch is charged at 33p per minute (cheap rate) and 44p per minute at all other times.

western Scotland will turn to snow and spread to Wales and much of central and western England. The snow will be mainly light but with occasional heavy falls, especially over the Welsh mountains and moors in the South-West. Eastern parts of England and Scotland will have a few snow showers. Outlook: wintry showers and overnight frosts.

ABROAD

MIDDAY: 1-4: shower, 5-8: fog, 9-12: rain, 13-16: rain, 17-20: rain, 21-24: rain, 25-28: rain, 29-31: rain.

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WEATHER

Outbreaks of rain or sleet over Northern Ireland and

western Scotland will turn to snow and spread to Wales and

much of central and western England. The snow will be

mainly light but with occasional heavy falls, especially over

● BUSINESS AND FINANCE 19-26
● FOCUS: WASTE MANAGEMENT 28,29
● LAW 30,31
● SPORT 35-38

BUSINESS

TUESDAY FEBRUARY 12 1991

Business Editor
John Bell

Receiver cuts 347 jobs at Lewis's

LEWIS, the department store group that went into receivership with liabilities of more than £50 million, is making 347 workers redundant. Grant Thornton, the accountants acting as joint receiver, said there was no option but to cut jobs.

The receiver has also sold Lewis's Travel, the holiday shop business, to United Co-operative, part of the Co-op group, for an undisclosed amount. The sale protects 15,000 travellers who have booked holidays.

Job cuts are across the group at all levels. The Leicester store has suffered most with 68 jobs gone.

Gatward resigns from TVS

JAMES Gatward has resigned from TVS Entertainment, the southern England independent television contractor, less than two months after being ousted from the chief executive position in a boardroom coup.

The departure of Mr Gatward "forms part of the reorganisation of TVS" after the installation of Rudolph Agnew as chairman last December. A six-figure compensation package is being negotiated and more director level changes are expected.

Berkeley Govett

BERKELEY Govett, the financial services group, increased its pre-tax profit by 18 per cent to \$46.3 million in the year to end-December. The dividend has been raised from 16 to 19 cents per share.

Factory price rise knocks inflation fight

By COLIN NAKEROUGH, ECONOMICS CORRESPONDENT

GOVERNMENT figures showing the largest monthly rise in factory gate prices for nearly ten years cast fresh doubt over whether inflationary pressures are easing and dampened market hopes of a cut in interest rates.

The 1.2 per cent surge in January in output prices for manufactured goods was double what the City was expecting. Instead of slowing the annual increase, as analysts had expected, it pushed it up from 5.9 to 6.3 per cent.

Despite deepening recession and falling raw material prices, manufacturers raised their prices sharply to try to protect profit margins, passing on higher wage bills to the

retail trade which is already suffering from falling demand. While the Treasury put a brave face on the surprise acceleration, reaffirming its view that inflation will fall throughout 1991, the output price rise was unwelcome to the government which has sought to establish credibility via its commitment to deflation.

Output prices have become an important guide to the authorities' view of underlying inflation since the Bank of England last year said the index was the measure it preferred.

Remarks from Helmut Schlesinger, the Bundesbank vice-president, suggesting German monetary policy would remain tight, added to

the uncertainty about the scope for interest rate cuts in Britain, given sterling's position at the bottom of the exchange rate mechanism.

The price industry paid for its raw materials and fuel rose by an adjusted 0.4 per cent in January, after an 0.2 per cent fall in December. A fall of 0.5 per cent had been forecast for January. Last month's rise meant a provisional annual fall of 2.3 per cent after a 3.0 per cent drop in the year to December.

Although January is the main month for factories to raise prices, recent surveys have suggested companies feel less able to do so this year.

Chris Dillow, UK economist at Nomura Research Institute, saw the increase reflecting the continued squeeze on company profits, but showed that industry is determined to protect its margins at the cost of inflation.

He noted that the underlying picture for output prices was still worse. Excluding food, tobacco and drink, the annual increase was 6.6 per cent in January compared with 6.1 per cent in June.

Richard Jeffrey, chief economist at Hoare Govett, said the price surge was a shock, but the key question was how much of the rise could be passed on to the consumer. In the present economic climate, he expected retailers to have to absorb a large part of the increases.

With wage costs still rising at an annual rate of 10.5 per cent, output prices could take some months to slow down. Mr Jeffrey sees this taking until the second quarter.

Earnings and unemployment data are due on Thursday, and retail price inflation on Friday, the day the City economists still believe could offer the government a chance to cut base rates.

Investors seeking early base rate cut

By MICHAEL CLARK, STOCK MARKET CORRESPONDENT

CITY investors are still pinning their hopes on an early cut in interest rates despite the latest government figures showing the battle against inflation is far from over with a 1.2 per cent jump in factory gate prices last month.

Share prices started the new two-week trading account in confident mood extending last week's 80-point rise. The FT-SE 100 index closed near the top, rising 33.8 to 2,279.0, helped by a 20 point-plus rise in the Dow Jones average on Wall Street.

By the close of business a total of 478 million shares had been traded with continental institutions leading the latest wave of buyers. They still regarded London as cheap compared with New York and are looking for sharp gains once British interest rates fall. City

fund managers have an estimated \$40 billion worth of funds ready to invest in the market. They have built it up since the crash in 1987.

Pressure within the Square Mile is increasing for a cut in bank base rates despite attempts by Norman Lamont, the Chancellor, and the Bank of England to play down recent speculation. Dealers claim the equity market is already discounting a fall of at least 1 per cent after its recent rise of more than 5 per cent since the start of the year.

But Government securities gave back some of their recent gains, closing with losses of 2 1/2 per cent. The longer-dated end. The bond market has risen by almost 9 per cent since January 1.

Stock markets, page 23

Blue Arrow trial opens

By ANGELA MACKEY

SEVEN defendants and three banks were accused in the Central Criminal Court yesterday of conspiracy to rig the market in Blue Arrow shares in 1987 to protect their investment in the company and their reputations in the City.

At the beginning of what is expected to be the longest City fraud trial to date, Nicholas Purnell, QC, prosecuting on behalf of the Serious Fraud Office, alleged the advisers and brokers to a record-breaking £837 million rights issue to fund a takeover by Blue Arrow, the recruitment group, of Manpower, its American rival, abused their positions and lied to the Bank of England, the International Stock Exchange and the market.

All ten defendants deny charges of conspiracy to defraud.

In a specially built court in Chichester, Rents, off Chancery Lane, Mr Purnell alleged, in his opening address, that those who made decisions on September 29, 1987, about how to cover up the failure of the rights issue, entered into a dishonest agreement to rig the market by warehousing 94 million shares in Blue Arrow.

"They hid... the failure of the rights issue, they hid the shares and announced the issue had been successful. They parcelled them [the shares] up to avoid notifying the company, Blue Arrow."

"They were sitting astride an obvious conflict of interest because they were the largest shareholders of the client they were hired to advise."

Mr Purnell alleged this was also a fraud by the three companies.

He said that "the integrity of a transaction of that sort has repercussions far beyond the interest of those who buy and sell the shares."

The three corporate defendants are County NatWest, NatWest Investment Bank, its parent, and UBS Phillips & Drew Securities. The individual defendants are Jonathan Cohen, deputy chief executive of NatWest Investment Bank and chief executive of County NatWest at the time of the rights issue; Stephen Clark, group finance director of County NatWest; David Reed, former executive director and managing director of corporate finance at County NatWest; Nicholas Wells, former County NatWest executive director and a former member of the corporate advisory department; Alan Keat, a partner in Travers Smith Smith, the City solicitors, who advised County NatWest on the rights issue; Martin Gibbs, former director of UBS Phillips & Drew; and Christopher Smith, former director of UBS Phillips & Drew.

They all deny that on or between September 22 and December 20, 1987 they conspired with others to "defraud" such persons who had or might have had an interest in acquiring, disposing of, subscribing for, sub-underwriting or otherwise dealing in shares of Blue Arrow plc by dishonestly misleading the market.



David Reed, one of ten defendants, right, with John Hume, his solicitor

not stop the conspirators issuing two press releases claiming the rights issue had been a complete success.

County NatWest Ltd, the merchant bankers, then had to find ways of reducing its holding below 5 per cent of Blue Arrow's now enlarged share capital to escape informing the Stock Exchange of its holding, which would have revealed that the issue had been a disaster.

Mr Purnell said the conspirators drew up an arrangement that kept their identifiable holding to 4.999 per cent. This involved the "warehousing out" of artificial parcels of shares to subsidiaries of NatWest Investment Bank Ltd, the merchant bank's parent bank, and to the London branch of Union Bank of Switzerland, which is the ultimate parent of UBS Phillips & Drew. County NatWest also placed more than 34 million shares with its "retainer" market-makers who were not bound by the 5 per cent ceiling.

Another 36 per cent was sold to institutions the following day, according to the prosecution, leaving them with 26 per cent, but this did

rule and promised to meet their holding costs, indemnify them against loss and allow them to keep 30 per cent of any profits made when the shares were sold.

Mr Purnell said the agreement also involved an underlying arrangement not to sell the shares "willy-nilly" and so harm others involved.

Mr Purnell said the first big problem to hit the conspiracy was the stock market crash on Monday, October 19, 1987. Another subsidiary of NatWest Investment Bank Ltd was found to be holding 1 million Blue Arrow shares. That would have pushed the merchant bank's identifiable holding to more than 5 per cent.

Mr Purnell said that without "really blushing" the conspirators took a similar number of shares from the merchant bank and "shoved it into" their market-making arm.

The case continues.

Business failures at record levels

By JONATHAN PRYNN

THE level of business failures in Britain ran at record levels last year, according to two sets of figures from the British Chamber of Commerce and Trade Indemnity (TI), the credit insurance company.

The TI statistics, which refer to irrecoverable bad debts and business failures notified by TI's policyholders, show the level of business failures rose 77 per cent last year.

The total for last year was 4,581, compared with 2,590 in 1989. The fourth quarter saw a 75 per cent rise on the same period in 1989. The figures are the highest since TI's current measurement of business failures was introduced in 1977.

The highest increase was in the building and construction sector, which saw business failures almost double, compared with 1989, at 1,370. Engineering and metals saw a 92 per cent rise, and failures in the service sector rose 81 per

cent. The lowest increase, 35 per cent, was reported by textiles and clothing.

The rate of failure accelerated for the engineering and services sectors in the fourth quarter when they recorded increases of 113 per cent and 109 per cent respectively.

TI said it was pessimistic about any short-term improvement in the figures. "Even if interest rates were to be significantly reduced immediately there is likely to be a 25 per cent increase in business failures in 1991," according to the company.

The Chamber of Commerce, which records company insolvencies in England and Wales, reported a 43 per cent rise last year to 14,951. The figures for the final quarter show a 59 per cent annual rise to 4,368, an all-time high. The previous peak was the second quarter of 1985 with 4,070 company insolvencies.

Mountleigh runs rule over Fairchild

By MATTHEW BOND

NELSON Peltz and Peter May have given their first indication of where they intend to take Mountleigh Group, the British property-trading company that the two American businessmen bought into 15 months ago.

In an unexpected International Stock Exchange announcement, Mountleigh said it was holding "tentative and preliminary" discussions with Fairchild Corporation, a manufacturer of aviation fasteners quoted in New York.

The two sides are discussing some firm proposals. For each ordinary share in Fairchild, Mountleigh would pay \$10.25 in cash plus a further \$4 in the form of a preference share, valuing Fairchild at about \$280 million.

The only clue to how the deal might be structured is

that the statement says the preference share issue would be "either issued or guaranteed" by Mountleigh, suggesting any bid would come through a specially created, off-balance sheet vehicle. Last month Mountleigh reported it had net borrowings of £591 million at its October year-end.

The announcement indicates that Mr Peltz and Mr May, having travelled over a number of possible European deals, have decided to return to home ground for their first acquisition for Mountleigh.

The two made their reputation, and fortune, by rescuing and then selling "Triangle Corporation, the American packaging group, largely with the help of junk-bond finance supplied by Drexel Burnham Lambert.



Fastening their sights on US: May, left, and Peltz

Hunter Saphir in talks

By MARTIN BARROW

HUNTER Saphir, the USM-quoted food group, confirmed it was in talks which may lead to an offer for the company. The announcement was made at the request of the International Stock Exchange after sharp movements in Hunter's share price in early trading.

The shares gained 5p last week, climbed 8p to 65p before yesterday's announcement, then rose another 21p to close at 81p. At current levels the company is capitalised at almost £20 million.

Nicholas Saphir, chairman, said talks with a third party were at an early stage and he was not in a position to make a disclosure. The Saphir family speaks for about 30 per cent of the company, the brands of which include Bunterkist confectionery.

Talks are believed to have started after an approach was made for a 20 per cent stake in the company held by Berisford International, the troubled commodities group. Potential bidders could include Delag.

Hunter Saphir had a difficult year in 1989 but pre-tax profits, recovered by 51 per cent to £3.51 million in the six months to September 1990. However, County NatWest has downgraded its forecast for the year from £6.2 million to £5.9 million, compared with £5.6 million last year.

French state aid may break EC rules

By WOLFGANG MÜNCHAU

EUROPEAN BUSINESS CORRESPONDENT

PROPOSALS by the French government to grant subsidies to companies hit by the recession are likely to lead to a dispute with the European Commission, where fears are growing that France is again on the verge of an overgenerous interpretation of EC state aid rules.

EC sources are concerned about whether French proposals would be consistent with European state aid policy, and whether they might lead to a distortion of competition in some industries.

Roger Faureix, the French industry minister, promised specific help to four industrial sectors: cars, comput-

ers, tyres and textiles. Companies that would benefit include Michelin, which is making losses because of the crash in the world tyre industry, Bull, the computer company, and Renault and Peugeot, the car makers.

There are fears among French industrialists that state-owned French companies would receive most of the grants.

French state aid to industry has long been a controversial issue and last year the Commission fined Renault £3.5 billion, because it failed to meet commitments to restructure the company, after it had received substantial grants from the government.

In an interview in yesterday's *Liberation*, the French daily news-

paper, Francois Perigot, the president of the Conseil National du Patronat Français, the French employers' federation, said: "One must not use certain real, and hopefully temporary difficulties, as an excuse to relaunch an industrial policy in some sectors under the patronage of the state."

Realism over the prospects of the French economy deepened recently after the decision by the Bundesbank to raise interest rates, as a result of which France is prevented from loosening its monetary policy.

The European Commission is concerned about the inclusion of textiles in the list, because textiles and shipbuilding are sectors that under EC rules must not receive state aid because there is overcapacity in the

industry. That includes aid which is otherwise acceptable, such as regional assistance.

M Faureix, who has yet to submit a formal proposal to the National Assembly, has targeted research and development, training, and regional assistance, the classic areas of industrial policy, as the core of the package.

The commission has been told by the French authorities that all schemes would comply with EC law. The limited scope for subsidies under the current schemes are not designed to pull companies out of financial difficulties, while subsidies outside the schemes require a "quid-pro-quo" commitment, an undertaking that firms will restructure and cut capacity.

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Fimbra, the toothless watchdog

COMMENT

The trouble with investor compensation schemes is that, badly handled, they can turn into both a charter for rogues and a delusion for gullible, greedy or inexperienced investors. This dilemma was always most likely to surface in the area of personal financial services policed by Fimbra, the Financial Intermediaries, Managers and Brokers' Regulatory Association.

Fimbra faces profound problems. It cannot easily afford to pay its share of currently outstanding compensation claims and is even suggesting that, in some unspecified way, the very investors it was designed to protect should themselves be partly responsible for their own losses.

To the investing public, this will sound like an abrogation of Fimbra's regulatory responsibility and worry those who believe themselves to be covered by perfectly adequate compensation arrangements.

The existing compensation scheme nodes in the direction of investor responsibility by allowing only for claims of up to £48,000 to be met. This embodies

the admirable principle of *caveat emptor* to a modest degree. But the debate opens up the much wider issue of whether Fimbra's prime role should be that of an efficient refunder of savings to defrauded investors or a forceful regulator that weeds out the fraudsters before they can do any damage.

Fimbra's financial problems, the implied question over its effectiveness and its possible need to merge with other regulatory organisations are blots on the system of self-regulation that emerged from the Financial Services Act.

Millions of man hours went into the preparation of the legislation, the succeeding establishment of the many regulatory bodies that it called into being, the formulation of their rules and the funding of their operations. But how much has been achieved if the very area of personal financial services which most needed effective

systems of regulation and compensation has been left with a flawed and inadequate system? The drive for reform of the grossly inadequate investor protection legislation that preceded the Financial Services Act arose through a series of scandals that mostly hurt private savers. It is no hyperbole to say that lives were ruined under a regime that relied upon poorly informed and inadequately staffed civil service departments to police hundreds of financial intermediaries.

In devising solutions to Fimbra's plight, the interests of the saver must be paramount and not lost amid a welter of bureaucratic wrangling over which body pays compensation and who regulates whom. This may in the end call for much expanded surveillance of

companies, much tougher barriers to entering the business and the acceptance by practitioners that liabilities for a worthwhile compensation scheme may be much heavier than they imagined.

If self regulation fails those who most need its protection, then the statutory options must be taken from their filing cabinets, dusted off and re-examined yet again.

That was the appalling question John Major and Norman Lamont faced yesterday as they looked at the January

producer price figures.

Of course, a single month's figures have to be treated with caution, and, of course, there are all kinds of mitigating factors available for the wrong-footed Treasury economists and City analysts. The fact remains, however, that after 21 months of base rates at 14 per cent or 15 per cent, and after six months of outright recession, no visible progress has yet been made against underlying inflation.

Sooner or later inflation will be cracked and there is still no reason to disbelieve the Treasury's official forecast that the annual increase in the producer price index (PPI) will be down to 5 per cent and the retail price index to 3.5 per cent by the fourth quarter. After all, an improvement of 1.3 percentage points in the annual PPI is not an ambitious target for a policy that is now willing to tolerate almost one million additional unemployed.

The problem is that the optimists who had been forecasting inflation rates of 4 per cent or less by the end of the year may have to go back to their computers. But now a more alarming reason for scepticism has to be added to the list. January's PPI figures suggest that recession could be having a perverse effect on manufacturers, in much the same way that high interest rates had a perverse impact on the labour market.

Workers responded to high interest rates by raising their wage demands, not lowering them. Similarly, manufacturers may be reacting to the profits squeeze by trying to raise prices instead of undercutting each other to preserve market share.

In the end, such behaviour is bound to be defeated by a prolonged recession, just as the wage pressure in the labour market is now beginning to subside as a result of high unemployment. But it took two years of high interest rates to achieve this result in the labour market. How much recession will it now take to force manufacturers to start cutting prices?

Jaguar drives up against sales barrier in America

RARELY has a triumph turned sour so quickly as Ford's £1.6 billion purchase of Jaguar 18 months ago.

Environmental concerns, recession, the Gulf war and a strong pound have dealt bitter blows to the luxury car maker in its most important market, the United States.

With prospects of a rapid upturn slim, Jaguar is to shed 1,000 jobs at its British plants, and has asked its 11,000 remaining workers to turn up just one week in three until the end of March.

In 1989, America accounted for 18,700 of the 42,000 vehicles produced by the Coventry car maker. But in January, sales of Jaguar cars in America plunged almost 70 per cent to 511. The slump came after sales during the whole of 1990 fell almost 13 per cent from 1989 levels.

The American motor industry is facing its worst sales crunch for a decade. According to the National Automobile Dealers Association about 900 dealers liquidated their businesses last year, against 300 in a typical year.

Noel Appleton, managing director of a BMW dealership in Houston, Texas, said: "We had 21 days of no sales in January."

Jaguar claims it has been hit no harder than other luxury car makers in America. Sales of the BMW seven series are 70 per cent off and there has been a 45 per cent drop in the sales of the Mercedes S class.

But modest gains in Jaguar's share of the fast-slumping luxury car market provide few grounds for comfort. This week, Jaguar launches an important promotion by refunding the 10 per cent luxury tax that since the start of the year American consumers have to



Falling fortunes: Sales of Jaguar cars fell to 511 in America last month.

pay on any car costing more than \$30,000. The refund will be based on the full recommended retail price. On a top of range XJ-S that could trim \$3,300 from Jaguar's profit.

One dealer in New Jersey said that although the XJ-S convertible has a recommended price of \$63,600 the salesmen will go down to \$56,000.

Jaguar is also having to carry an American gas guzzler tax on its XJ-S models, which doubled this year to \$3,000 a car. The combination means that, in effect, Jaguar and its dealers are selling the top convertible for more than \$12,000 below list price.

In most of America, Jaguar has made nominal price increases for its models of 6 per cent, less than last year's inflation rate.

The luxury tax refund is not being offered in California, where emission laws have prevented the company from raising car prices.

Pressure on the main as-

sembly plant at Coventry is becoming acute. During the boom years of the Eighties, a weak pound and strong American orders ensured that demand for Jaguars outstripped supply. Efficiency of the manufacturing operation was a secondary priority. The Ford takeover and tougher market conditions have exposed the weakness of that strategy.

American company analysts have insisted from the first that the price paid by Ford for Jaguar, outbidding General Motors, reflected more snob value than profit potential. They are now trying to persuade Ford to sell the luxury car maker, but realise the price would be nowhere near what it paid.

Jaguar's profits are no longer shown separately from those of its parent. Thanks not least to the dollar's weakness, they must be slim.

Ford's own financial health is in tatters. Sales dropped 36 per cent last month. Cash flow

is falling and its debts are rising, forcing a recent cut in the dividend. The shares have lost 36 per cent to \$31 in the past 12 months.

There can be scant comfort for the Jaguar workforce. Sales of Jaguars in Britain, the company's second largest market, fell 20.8 per cent during January. The new model programme, which is expected to be accompanied by substantial rises in output, will not be in production before the mid-Nineties.

Ford's first focus has been on manufacturing efficiency. With the threat of redundancy overshadowing them, the ability of Jaguar workers to resist changes in working practices has been much reduced.

If business and consumer confidence fails to show signs of recovery by the end of March, Ford's commitment will face a stern test.

PHILIP ROBINSON
AND ROSS TIEMAN

Marking time at Dalgety

TEMPUS

DALGETY, the pet and human foods group, is an investment case with the parts more interesting than the whole.

Individual divisions have performed fairly strongly in a competitive environment in the six months ended December 31, but the product of a changed accounting mix saw group pre-tax profits for the period down from \$57.1 million to \$51.7 million.

Net earnings, however, managed to inch forward from 16.7p to 16.9p a share, which leaves little option but merely to maintain the interim dividend at 7.15p a share.

The slide at the pre-tax level reflects a dearth of property sales, \$400,000 against \$4.1 million in last year's first half.

Maurice Warren, group chief executive since October 1989, continues to make his mark in focusing Dalgety on its core food and agribusiness, and he should soon be finalising the sale of produce interests in America with an annual turnover of \$150 million but which do not make decent pre-tax returns.

The potential loss on such

an asset sale has already been taken into account within an extraordinary charge of \$6.7 million in the first half. Gearing has eased from 41 per cent at December 1989, to 31 per cent at December 1990, and is headed below 20 per cent this year end.

Dalgety is fit enough to be on the look out for acquisitions in Europe and Britain, and could see pre-tax profits of £118.1 million at year end, with net earnings modestly up at 37p a share.

This puts Dalgety at 370p, up 2p, on a prospective rating of 10, backed by a 6.5 per cent yield. Hold.

Berkeley Govett

AS A London-quoted, Jersey-registered financial services group accounting in dollars and originally specialising in development finance for small American technology companies, Berkeley Govett does

not have much of a stock market image. This is especially since Arthur Truget, the group's founder, upset the establishment in a 1987 battle with Touche Kemmant.

To make matters worse, the group made a rights issue in 1986 at 60 per cent above its present price and has accumulated several state bulls among sector analysts. That background explains why the shares have a bargain basement rating that belies strong, consistent dollar earnings growth and a healthy looking balance sheet.

In 1990, pre-tax profits rose 18 per cent to \$46.3 million, earnings per share by 11 per cent to 46.5 cents and the dividend by 19 per cent to 19 cents gross. In sterling, however, the dividend is merely maintained while earnings are slightly down.

Profits growth came entirely from London Pacific Life and Annuity, an American operation specialising in single pre-

mium pensions annuity policies, which contributed \$16 million from a standing start. That could only be done by using embedded-value accounting - which takes in, over ten years, discounted profits for the life of the policies - but is still impressive.

Elsewhere, profits were down 24 per cent. The British John Govett fund manager, now in emerging markets, moved ahead. But Berkeley, the original American development capital promoter, had a predictably poor year and has reoriented itself to the medical sector and earning fees on refinancing for troubled companies in its stable.

This certainly showed the virtues of having several strings to the bow. This year, the group aims to buy into American fund management to tie in with its distribution network and policy funds, but not through a share issue.

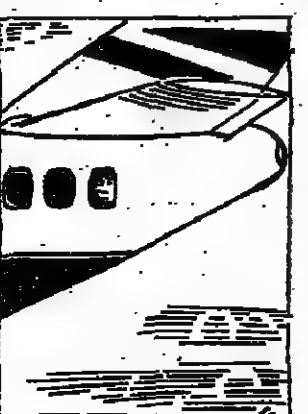
At today's exchange rate, the shares, at 123p, sell at 5.3 times earnings with a yield (before Jersey tax) of 7.7 per cent. A potential bargain for those with faith in the sector.

THE TIMES CITY DIARY

Lamond slips out of BZW

TALES of job losses in the Square Mile have become depressingly familiar in recent weeks, but a tale of woe with a difference is doing the rounds at BZW Securities. And, as a result, the firm is looking for someone to run the London end of its Hong Kong operation. Ed Lamond, the previous incumbent and a director of the firm, left abruptly ten days ago, after an unfortunate error that would cause even the thickest skinned market man to wince. Lamond had, it seems, approached his superiors at BZW about a pay rise for his team. Receiving a curt "no", he then telephoned an old friend at Swiss Bank Corporation, in Hong Kong, and asked if he would be interested in poaching the entire desk. The friend requested further details, and to facilitate the process, Lamond sent them by facsimile. But the machine he used was pre-programmed, and the letter listing their names, salaries and "poachability", was dispatched to BZW's own Hong Kong offices instead. BZW confirms that Lamond has left but refuses to confirm a report in the *South China Morning Post* that it might now see him "for enticing his colleagues to defect."

has been causing much mirth among the builders contracted to carry out refurbishment work on his new luxury home in Wilmslow, Manchester's snooker belt. Stunned in London by the snow, Harrington eventually decided to hire a car - a Jaguar, of course - on Saturday morning so that he could drive home. This he duly did, and the remainder of his weekend was comparatively uneventful. Until, that is, yesterday when, still in possession of the car, he decided to switch on the engine in advance of his departure, to allow it time to defrost. He turned the key, started the engine and then went back into the house, only to activate the car's central locking device as he closed the door. Watched by his laughing builders he tried in vain to



This is a recorded agreement - Captain Higgins and the crew have all accepted voluntary redundancy.

open the door and eventually made his way to work in a cab. His long-suffering wife, Janet, has thus not only had to contend with the workmen but also the noise of a continually running engine, since the car had still - as of last night - not run out of petrol.

DETERMINED to have some fun with the acronyms that now plague City rulebooks, Bell Lavrie White, the Edinburgh stockbroker, has challenged readers of his in-house magazine to dream up as many anagrams as they can for TAURUS, the electronic settlement system due to be brought in by the International Stock Exchange next year. After receiving a flood of bawdy - and largely unprintable - replies, Bell Lavrie is now challenging readers of the *City Diary* to do better, promising an 18-year-old bottle of Glenmorangie for the best offering...

Guiding light

TOURISTS wandering about the suburbs of Bruges, the Belgian town where Mrs Thatcher made her feelings about a federal Europe perfectly clear, were amused to spot a note, written in English and pinned to a notice board on the wall in a local church. It read: "Lead us, dear Lord, to good, inexpensive restaurants where the food is superb, the waiters friendly and the wine included in the price of the meal. Give us the wisdom to do correctly in currencies we do not understand. Forgive us for underrunning out of ig-

norance or over-tipping out of fear. Make the natives love us for what we are and not for what they can screw out of us."

Parker's parkas

IT IS always said that the most genuine do-gooders do so anonymously and if that is the case then Alan Parker, head of Brunswick, the PR firm, and son of one-time British Rail chairman Sir Peter Parker, is about to have due recognition bestowed upon him. For in the dusk of late afternoon on Friday, as most other Londoners were thinking only of their early dash home, blaming the weather, Parker was spotted, all alone, unloading 15 brand new sleeping bags from his company Jaguar. He then unceremoniously distributed them to those homeless individuals who regularly curl up for the night on benches in Lincoln's Inn Fields, the historic grassy - or rather snowy - square that his offices overlook. An initial enquiry to his secretary yesterday met with a complete denial that it had been Parker, or indeed anyone else at the firm. "I would have known about it," she said, before helpfully suggesting that it could perhaps have been someone from another firm in an adjacent building. Somewhat embarrassed she telephoned up four later to say that it had in fact been Parker after all, but that he had not wanted anyone to know about it - not even, it seems, her.

CAROL LEONARD

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Compass buys three hospitals for £25.7m

By JONATHAN PRYNN

COMPASS, the contract catering group that is becoming a significant force in private healthcare, is to increase its hospital-bed capacity by 50 per cent through a £25.7 million acquisition.

The group is buying the three British hospitals owned by Universal Health Services International, an American company. The hospitals, including a spinal unit, are in the Southeast of England.

Last month Compass paid £3 million for the Carmarthen Private Hospital in west Wales. John Greenwood, managing director of Compass Healthcare, said the acquisition would help extend geographical coverage. Compass is Britain's fourth largest provider of private healthcare.

Of the total consideration, £13.2 million is payable on completion, of which £3.4 million is to settle inter-company debt. The balance is due over the following four years. Depending on the profitability of one of the hospitals, up to £2 million extra may be payable by Compass in December 1994.

The assets being acquired are valued at £22 million and the pre-tax profits of the three hospitals in the year to the end of last December were £14,000. The deal is financed with bank debt, taking Compass's total borrowings to £50 million. After goodwill write-offs, the company had net assets of only £8 million at the last balance-sheet date. However, the post-acquisition interest bill will be covered five times, said Compass.

Eadie sells Alloy Wire

EADIE Holdings, the USM-quoted transport equipment to wire-products manufacturer, is selling its Alloy Wire subsidiary and associated property to its management for £700,000, but further payment for £700,000 may be made if Alloy Wire's net assets exceed £475,000. In addition, a £200,000 dividend has been paid by Alloy Wire to Eadie.

Continental buying starts account off on confident note

THE equity market started the two-week trading account on a high note, with dealers still looking for an imminent cut in base rates.

Share prices closed near their best levels of the day, helped by a rise of more than 20 points on Wall Street in resumed trading. The FT-SE 100 index extended last week's 80-point gain with a rise of 33.8 points to 2,279.0, as 478 million shares changed hands. Continental institutions are said to have led the latest charge, and still regard the London market as cheap.

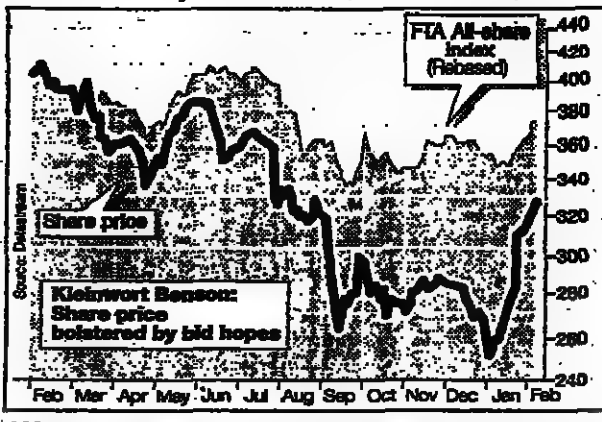
Dealers say a cut in interest rates is only a matter of time and that the recent strength of the equity market is discounting a fall of about 1½ points. But the longer the Chancellor holds out against a reduction, the more volatile conditions will become.

Government securities gave back some of their recent gains, closing with losses of up to 5½ at the long end. The bond market has risen 9 per cent since the start of the year.

Kleinwort Benson, the merchant bank and securities house, continued to rally from recent depressed levels, with the price climbing 13p to 329p. Last week, the shares were trading around the 280p level. A trading loss of £34 million on the purchase of Burmah's near-30 per cent stake in Premier Oil is expected to plunge the group into the red during calendar 1990, with a deficit of £5 million expected against a profit of £83 million last time.

Speculators say the weakness of the shares has made the group vulnerable to a bid and its name is being linked with Banque Indosuez. Talk of a rationalisation of the securities business also lifted the shares.

The market's recent strength and the prospect of a revival in corporate activity lifted other merchant banks. Brown Shipley firmed 1p to



209p, Rea Brothers 1p to 26p, Schroders 10p to 67p and SG Warburg 9p to 36p.

Incheape, the international leader, fell 4p to 246p after James Capel, the broker, placed a line of 4.2 million shares with various fund managers at 245p each. By the close of business, 13 million shares had changed hands.

The severe weather boosted the electricity companies, with

Fund managers may be more optimistic about prospects, but it is hard going for engineers, says Henry Gervet. The weaker gives warning that demand is falling, while costs rise. Included among its sell recommendations are TI Group, 4p up at 425p, GKN, 12p up at 336p, and Lucas 2p up at 145p.

Eastern 2p better at 170p, East Midlands 2p to 179p, London 5p to 184p, Manweb 7p to 212p, Midland 4p to 180p, Northern 7p to 195p, Norwich 4p to 190p, Seaboard 5p to 175p, Southern 34p to 179p, South Wales 3p to 196p, South West 2p to 188p and Yorkshire 3p to 193p. The electricity package rose £32 to £1,840.

The cold weather also cheered British Gas, 24p better at 247p. Last week, the group beat the record output of 11.4 billion cubic

WORLD MARKETS

Doubts trim gains in Dax

Frankfurt A SURGE of confident buying pushed shares to their highest levels of the year, but orders started to tail off towards the end of trading as dealers became sceptical about whether recent price gains could be held.

A rush of buy orders in the first half hour pushed the Dax index to an intra-day high for the year of 1,495.15. Dealers said orders waned as the psychologically important 1,500 level approached and the Dax ended 20.92 points up at 1,488.74.

Former German bond prices and further share price gains on Wall Street on Friday were believed to be behind the early confidence. Some traders said the worst impact of the Gulf war on the market had passed.

Shares finished higher across the board before the Chinese New Year holiday this week, brokers said. The Hang Seng index gained 34.99 points to close at 3,394.08, while the Hong Kong index rose 23.22 points to end at 2,226.43. Anthony Mak, of Citicorp Vickers, said: "There is still a lot of cash coming into the market. This momentum will continue through the Chinese New Year." Turnover rose to HK\$1.35 billion (£87 million).

Singapore - Shares closed mixed in moderate trading, but the Straits Times Industrial index rose above the key 1,300 level to close at 1,302.03, up 7.93 points from Friday's. Brokers said prices edged up gradually from the opening bell after Friday's 20-point rise on Wall Street, but profit-taking was seen in the afternoon. The holiday in Tokyo and the approaching Lunar New Year holidays limited activity, brokers said.

Sydney - Bullish sentiment and hopes of another cut in official interest rates sent shares to their highest close in almost three months. Brokers reported heavy offshore interest in the top ten issues, and local institutions were also active. The All Ordinaries index rose 24.9 points, or 1.85 per cent, to 1,365.4 points, its highest close since November 23 last year.

Tokyo - The market was closed for a national holiday and will reopen today. On Friday, shares advanced for the fifth day in a row, fuelled by hopes of lower interest rates. (Reuters)

Gilts may shine again after three lean years

IN a year when more and more blood has been spilt in the equity market, gilt-edged brokers and market-makers were busy removing most of the stains accumulated on their carpets over the previous three disastrous years.

Together they made a modest profit of £40 million in 1990. Now they expect business to perk up and profits to reach respectable levels as the government returns to borrowing, and the recession accentuates the virtues of fixed-interest investments.

This change of fortunes has so far owed more to the shake-out among market professionals than recovery of turnover or renewed investor interest. Between the over-optimistic start of the new gilt-edged market in October 1986 and the end of 1989, the number of market-makers shrank from 27 to 19 and only two inter-dealer brokers out of six survived.

Taken together, gilt-edged market-makers lost more than £200 million of their original £500 million capital. Losses were even worse for many because Greenwell Montagu Goldman Sachs, BZW, Warburg, BT Gilts and the small specialist Aitken Campbell made combined profits of £28 million over those three bad years.

Even the size of the market shrunk as the government's financial surplus allowed it to buy in substantial quantities of stock. From a peak of more than £140 billion, the value of stock in issue dwindled to £122 billion at the end of 1990.

Apert from a further drop in the amount of stock in issue during the first three quarters of last year, the market stabilised. There were no further shutdowns, a third inter-dealer broker started operations and there has even been talk of some big groups joining the list of market-makers.

The dealers as a group also made a profit, albeit only 10 per cent on the remaining £400 million or so of capital. Some of the top firms reckon to have done much better than this, however, making returns of between 15 per cent and 20 per cent, or even more. Brokers have likewise profited from the changed atmosphere.

Turnover certainly recovered, though not to within striking distance of the first few months of the new market. More importantly, the decline of cut-throat competition has allowed margins to widen slightly. The new market-makers, most of whom were previously brokers, learned more about controlling and hedging their stock books.

Gilt-edged dealers who survived the shake-out expect to start making big profits again as the government returns to borrowing

There was also much more movement in prices. For most of the previous two years, long-term yields had edged between 9½ per cent and 10½ per cent, while short-term yields had moved relentlessly but slowly upwards. In 1990, one shock followed another after the hike in base rates to 15 per cent.

Fear of burgeoning inflation pushed long-term yields up 2.5 points in the spring until heavy hints were dropped that sterling would soon be fixed against the mark. Hardly had

'The decline of cut-throat competition has allowed margins to widen'

this become reality before the gilt-edged market, along with almost everyone else, was convulsed by a series of unexpected political upsets. The net result was that yields ended last year almost where they had started.

This year, developments seem - as they usually do - more predictable. They should be dominated by a return of net new gilt-edged issues as the government's financial surplus disappears, amid a recession in company profits, a rapid fall in the headline rate of inflation and a drop in short-term interest rates of uncertain extent.

'Government borrowing needs will breathe new life into market'

edged investment will centre on the new interplay between a pegged exchange rate and short-term interest rates. There will also be arguments about the true extent to which inflation has been beaten and, therefore, whether real yields on long-dated stocks should be calculated against retail price inflation or the slower moving underlying measures.

There is, however, little argument about the greatest source of excitement. Govern-

ment's borrowing needs will breathe new life into a market that had become almost moribund by international standards. The Bank of England has already called on the market twice for a total of £1 billion. But this failed to cause much immediate interest or excitement in spite of the absence of new gilt-edged issues since mid-1988.

In the current financial year, there will be a dramatic turnaround in public sector finances as well as an estimated further £6 billion of redemptions. Depending on forecasts of the borrowing requirement, the Bank may, therefore, have to issue between £10 billion and £13 billion of new gilt-edged stock.

Roger Bootle of Greenwell Montagu has argued that the government will not wish to issue long-term stocks at today's yields because it expects inflation to come down sharply and permanently. For that reason issues may continue to centre on shorter dates and on adding to the £16 billion of index-linked stocks.

Given the government's desire to give psychological backing to its new European credentials, early issues of the first British stocks denominated in European currency units (ecus) are likely.

There is a danger that the gilt-edged market will still not regain its liquidity if the Bank of England insists on maintaining a variety of stocks out of proportion to the size of the market. In future, the London gilt-edged market will not stand on its own but compete with the stock issued in other centres and particularly in other linked European currencies.

Rival centres, notably Paris, have developed their markets by concentrating issues in a carefully designed stable of stocks offering the required range of maturities and different characteristics such as index-linking and high and low coupons. Such stocks can have enough liquidity to be standard counters in the international debt market.

While there were no new issues, the Bank of England could make only limited progress in this direction. This year, it will have a chance to give the London market a double boost.

GRAHAM SEARJEANT
Financial Editor

WALL STREET

Early rise for Dow

New York BLUE chips extended gains in active morning trading as the market's optimism induced more investors to invest side-line cash in shares.

The Dow Jones industrial average was ahead 22.53 points to 2,853.22.

Paul Hennessey, vice president of trading at the Boston

Co, said sellers were on the sidelines, but there was no urgency to move in. "You don't want to be raising cash in a market that looks so good," he added.

He said the market's rise was "a continuation of the thrust to the upside. You can't just turn it around". (Reuters)

WORLD MARKET INDICES

Index	Value	Daily change	Yearly change	Daily change	Yearly change
The World	611.5	0.5	8.5	0.8	7.2
Europe (free)	116.9	0.5	6.5	0.5	7.1
Europe (fixed)	106.0	0.7	7.2	0.7	1.0
Europe (free)	106.0	0.7	7.1	0.6	5.7
Europe (fixed)	106.0	0.7	7.1	0.6	5.7
Europe (free)	106.0	0.7	7.1	0.6	5.7
Europe (fixed)	106.0	0.7	7.1	0.6	5.7
Europe (free)	106.0	0.7	7.1	0.6	5.7
Europe (fixed)	106.0	0.7	7.1	0.6	5.7
Europe (free)	106.0	0.7	7.1	0.6	5.7
Europe (fixed)	106.0	0.7	7.1	0.6	5.7

MAJOR INDICES

New York: Dow Jones	2870.79 (+40.10)
S&P Composite	365.35 (+6.00)
Nikkei Average	Closed
Hang Seng	3394.08 (+34.99)
FT-SE 100	2279.00 (+33.80)
Amsterdam	83.7 (+1.8)
Sydney: All Ordinaries	1365.4 (+24.9)
Frankfurt: DAX	1488.74 (+20.92)

FT-SE 100 VOLUMES

Vol '000	Vol '000	Vol '000	Vol '000
Abbey Nat	2,473	Caixa	1,747
ABN-Amro	1,832	CU	1,742
Anglian	1,033	Continental	1,022
ASDA	3,308	Deleage	1,389
ASDA Foods	255	Enterprise	737
Argyll	1,011	Euromet	1,158
BAA	308	Fisons	1,911
BET	2,421	Gen Acc	1,389
BGT	2,381	GE	4,084
Bat	2,388	Glaxo	1,495
Baxters	2,875	Grand Met	1,480
Baxters & Co	89	GUS	1,480
BBC	1,832	GUS	1,480
B&S	2,421	GUS	1,480
B&S	2,421	GUS	1,480
B&S	2,421	GUS	1,480
B&S	2,421	GUS	1,480

RECENT ISSUES

Alitalia Resources	37	Promote Int (44)	88 +4
Asbestos Res (100p)	11	St James Place (130p)	68 +1
Brabant Res (150p)	134	Smaller IT	60
Camw Group (30p)	126	Tr Euro Sw (100p)	150 +1
Castle Carr (50p)	36	Trp Inv Tst	44
CPV Jewell (50p)	36	Und Energy	1
Edco (100p)	140	Und Uniform	128
Faber Pinst (175p)	140	Unichem (100p)	128
Foreign & Col	146 +3	Wig Tpe App	197 +5
Invergard (135p)	59		
Lavender (100p)	59		
MAAC	59		
MIM (50p)	29		
Malaysia Capital	29		
Midland Food	29		
Parment (10p)	29		
Polican Gp (50p)	25		

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PLATINUM

From your Portfolio Platinum card check your eight share price movements on this page only. Add them to give you your overall total and check this against the daily dividend figure. If it matches you have won outright or a share of the daily prize money stated. If you win, follow the claim procedure on the back of your card. Always have your card available when claiming. Game rules appear on the back of your card.

No.	Company	Group	Cash to date
1	Slater Water	Water	
2	Powell Duffryn	Transport	
3	Down	Motor, Aircraft	
4	Glynwed	Industrials E-K	
5	Land Sec	Property	
6	TSB	Banks, Discount	
7	Wor	Industrials S-Z	
8	Bentley	Industrials A-D	
9	Unigate	Food	
10	Rasbros	Industrials L-R	
11	Ferry Group	Industrials E-K	
12	IMI	Industrials E-K	
13	Stakis	Motor, Aircraft	
14	BAA	Transport	
15	Thames Water	Water	
16	Be Aerospace	Motor, Aircraft	
17	Allied Irish	Banks, Discount	
18	Read Ltd	Newspapers, Pub	
19	Kwik Save	Food	
20	MB-Cardano	Industrials L-R	
21	BPS Ltd	Building Roads	
22	Perpetua Ltd	Paper, Print, Adv	
23	Widmore	Industrials S-Z	
24	Securor	Industrials S-Z	
25	Redfern	Industrials L-R	
26	Shoep Estate	Property	
27	Adams	Industrials A-D	
28	Sutton Egg	Industrials S-Z	
29	Unid Newspapers	Newspapers, Pub	
30	Holbar Bar	Property	
31	RM GP	Industrials A-D	
32	Wagon Ltd	Industrials S-Z	
33	RTK	Industrials A-D	
34	Enterprise	Oil, Gas	
35	Liquid	Industrials L-R	
36	Granger	Property	
37	ADT	Industrials A-D	
38	Rayson Green	Industrials S-Z	
39	Tidley	Industrials S-Z	
40	Cowic (T)	Motor, Aircraft	
41	Claydon	Industrials A-D	
42	Morgan CME	Industrials L-R	
43	Greycoat	Property	
44	Bosch	Industrials A-D	

Please take into account any minus signs

Weekly Dividend

Please make a note of your daily totals for the weekly dividend of £4,000 in Saturday's newspaper.

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN

There were no valid claims for the Portfolio Platinum prize yesterday. The £2,000 will be added to today's competition.

BRITISH FUNDS

Share	Price	Change
High	Low	

SHORTS (Under Five Years)

Share	Price	Change
High	Low	

FIVE TO FIFTEEN YEARS

Share	Price	Change
High	Low	

OVER FIFTEEN YEARS

Share	Price	Change
High	Low	

UNDATED

Share	Price	Change
High	Low	

INDEX-LINKED

Share	Price	Change
High	Low	

BANKS, DISCOUNT, HP

Share	Price	Change
High	Low	

STOCK EXCHANGE PRICES

Confident start to account

ACCOUNT DAYS: Dealings began yesterday. Dealings end February 22. Settlement day February 25. Settlement day March 4. Forward bargains are permitted on two previous business days.

Prices recorded are at market close. Changes are calculated on the previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Where one price is quoted, it is a middle price. Changes, yields and price earnings ratios are based on middle prices.

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100.00	99.50	British Airways	100.00	99.50	British Airways	100.00	99.50	British Airways

Garden group sows £3.2m survival issue

By GILLIAN BOWDITCH

HALLS Homes & Gardens, the USM quoted conservatory and greenhouse manufacturer, has told its shareholders that without a rights issue to raise £3.2 million, the company will not be able to continue trading through the recession.

Halls has borrowings of £7.3 million, which will peak in the spring at £8.5 million. Its gearing ratio is more than 200 per cent. The group is raising £3.2 million by way of a one for three rights issue at 10p a share. A further £1.5 million will be raised by way of a preference share issue to National Westminster Bank, which will convert £1.5 million of debt into equity.

Clive Gregory, the group's managing director, said the rights issue had been fully underwritten by 16 of the

group's largest institutional shareholders, including Scottish Amicable and Sun Life. The rescue package, which has taken four months to assemble, will raise enough to allow the group to continue trading for the foreseeable future.

Halls' sales of higher priced conservatories in 1990 fell by 33 per cent. The do-it-yourself superstore market, which accounts for 90 per cent of the group's turnover, has also been depressed. Mr Gregory said: "As a result, the group's turnover in the second half of last year was some 25 per cent behind plan and the group's operating loss and cash flow have deteriorated significantly."

Shareholders have been told that outstanding borrowings remain at an unacceptably

high level and the directors believe that the group will not be able to continue trading without a capital restructuring. If the rights issues do not succeed, and the group ceases to trade, there would probably be no assets for distribution to shareholders. Mr Gregory said.

Halls is expected to announce a substantial loss for 1990. There will be no final dividend and the payment of a 1p interim dividend, due on January 2, has been postponed. Assuming shareholders vote in favour of the rights issue at the extraordinary meeting on March 6, the board will be strengthened by the appointment of a finance director and another executive director. Existing directors will take up their rights.

Hi-Tec expects record profits

By PHILIP PANGALOS

HI-TEC Sports, Britain's leading sports shoe supplier, has provided a welcome break from the steady stream of gloom swamping the market, with the news that it expects record profits following a better than expected performance during the last six months. The shares responded with a 7p rise to 75p.

Frank van Wessel, chairman, has written to shareholders telling them that the company expects "to achieve a significant advance" in pre-tax profits for the year to end-January 1991, against last year's £6.4 million. He said profits are now expected to "exceed comfortably" the previous record of £7.01 million achieved in the year to end-January 1989.

Derek Watson, finance director, said: "We have ignored the recession. Our UK business (accounting for about 50 per cent of total sales) in particular has had a very successful year."

John Houlahan, at Hoare Govett, said branded sports shoes and clothing products are holding up well, despite the depressed state of the high street. He said the teenage to twenties market, which is influenced by fashion, still



Advances van Wessel appears to have the disposable income for these products.

Mr Houlahan expects pre-tax profits for the year to end-January 1991 to be "something over £7 million, with the optimistic on about £7.5 million and the realists on about £7.25 million."

It is estimated that the global market for sports shoes has grown from \$4.5 billion in 1985 to more than \$9.5 billion today.

The British sports shoe market is thought to be worth about £450 million annually, with one in four shoe purchases sports-related. In the American market, one in two purchases is sports related.

BHH in £11.6m buy

BHH Group, the property company based in Stoke, has bought four regional properties from Claydon, its rival, for £11.6 million.

The acquisition is being funded by a mixture of cash and shares, with Claydon receiving £9.3 million from BHH's existing resources and 6.4 million new BHH shares.

Bryant bought

Walker Greenbank, the wall-covering group, is buying Bryant, maker of commercial wallpapers, for up to £9.3 million. Bryant made pre-tax profits of £1.5 million in the 11 months to December 1.

Bank clearance

Banque Nationale de Paris's Ir44p-a share (40.4p) offer for Capital Leasing, of Ireland, has gone unconditional. BNP, which has received clearance for its offer from the Irish regulatory authorities, speaks for 86 per cent of Capital Leasing shares.

Trust assets dip

European Assets Trust saw an 18.1 per cent decline in net asset value per share from 8.87 to 7.26 pence in the year to December 31. The net asset value fell 22.7 per cent in sterling terms to 22.3p. Earnings per share rose from £0.16 (6.8p) to £0.2 (8.0p), making £0.19 (8.0p) for the year.

BUSINESS LETTERS

Standby L/Cs for small deals

From Mr Mark S. Briegal
Sir, Regarding Mr. Smith's letter published on February 7 about excessive Letter of Credit charges, may I add the perspective of one who used to run an L/C processing department for a large foreign bank. It costs a lot of money to process an L/C. Despite computerisation, it is still a manual task requiring highly skilled and expensive staff. My work on product costing and competitive pricing implies that most banks lost money on L/C transactions below \$50,000. Mr. Smith should also be aware that the confirmation fee is not a processing charge but a risk premium, which on Nigeria will be high.

The confirmed L/C is a very secure way to trade but is, unfortunately for Mr. Smith, inappropriate for small transactions involving high risk countries. He could consider alternatives such as revolving or standby L/Cs.
Yours faithfully,
MARK S. BRIEGAL
10 Amstel Close
The Village Green
Belmont, Lancashire.

Travel costs

From Mr S.A. Grover
Sir, I have read that British Airways, among others, are suffering a 20 per cent fall in business on some routes. The businessmen are said to be staying in their offices rather than risking the possibility of a terrorist attack.

Presumably business is still being negotiated, albeit perhaps on a smaller scale, by telephone, fax, telex or even by an old-fashioned letter.

Can I assume that some 50 per cent or similar percentage of overseas travel was unnecessary and superfluous?

In the future, I hope companies will look carefully at all forms of so-called business trips, thus keeping expenditure within reasonable bounds. If nothing else the economic recession and Gulf war might make companies more careful with their housekeeping.
Yours faithfully,
S.A. GROVER
44 Montebello Road,
New Elham, SE9.

Key issues remain unsolved

From Mr M. J. Dowdy
Sir, I hope Professor Tweedie is not as emotional as reports of his recent statement make him sound - "we are looking for a blatant case so we can hang someone".

At this stage he might do better to reflect on why present reporting standards are apparently so unsatisfactory.

Firstly, the Accounting Standards Committee was set up as long ago as 1970, its objectives encompassing "fundamentals of financial accounting and their application to financial statements". That so many key accounting issues remain unresolved after 21 years is remarkable. Was the ASC so incompetent?

Secondly, the Stock Exchange, DTT and HM Treasury have all been represented on the ASC but for most of that time the bodies which they represented appear to have exercised little significant influence on these issues which Professor Tweedie now considers totally unsatisfactory.

During this time, the users and preparers of accounts have been confused by too frequent changes of directions, as in the current cost debate.

Thirdly, it is worth considering who promoted and developed off-balance sheet structures and then invested in or lent money to those

incidents that the letter in The Times on December 20 describing the Electricity share as "a fiasco" was written by my father.

I think this is one of the occasions when the old man is absolutely right.

Faithfully,
RICHARD WERGAN
Milton Pond
Yealm Road
Newton Ferrers, Plymouth.

Prices to compare

From Mr David Shamash
Sir, My wife and I are casual investors in shares in both this country and the USA and keep an eye on quoted prices, but do not follow them closely, and therefore tend to notice only short term trends. The UK companies do not mention their share prices in their reports, but the American

schemes which promised such lucrative yields? The Bank of England, amongst others, might have had some views on this.

It seems that Professor Tweedie believes that more detailed and tighter rules like those of FASB in the USA would improve matters, although one has not noticed any shortage of spectacular failures in that country due to creative use of those same accounting rules.

So perhaps Professor Tweedie should lay down his moribund board and come while he shows whether he and his colleagues have the wit to create practical standards more effectively than their equally eminent predecessors.

Yours faithfully,
M. J. DOWDY, Harrington House,
Hill Way,
Gerrards Cross,
Buckinghamshire.

From Mr F. R. Hopkins
Sir, The Dinosaurs have been extinct, so we are told, for 65 million years, after having ruled the earth for almost a similar period.

How long will the Accountants rule ours?
Yours truly,
F. R. HOPKINS,
Flat 2,
The White House,
24 Third Avenue,
Hove, Sussex.

ones invariably give the highest and lowest prices recorded in each of the previous four quarters, which enables us to review their progress (or otherwise).
May I suggest that this practice be adopted by companies in this country.
Yours faithfully,
DAVID SHAMASH,
34 Floral Street,
London WC2.

SIEMENS

Information for Siemens shareholders

Major orders boost first quarter

The first quarter of the 1990/91 financial year was marked by very brisk ordering from German and international customers and by the consolidation of newly acquired firms. New orders

rose 16%. Owing to the high figure in the same period of 1989/90, sales grew by only 4%. Net income after taxes increased slightly to £131m.

New orders

Siemens - comprising Siemens AG and its consolidated German and international companies - booked orders amounting to £7,054m (1989/90: £6,069m) during the first quarter (1 Oct to 31 Dec. 1990), an increase of 16%. International orders rose 14% to £4,006m (1989/90: £3,499m). German domestic business, at 19%, grew even more rapidly to £3,048m (1989/90: £2,570m) with a strong contribution from activities in the new German states. New companies - in particular Siemens Nixdorf Informationssysteme AG (SNI) and the Plessey operations acquired by Siemens -

accounted for an increase of 5% in new orders. A series of major orders, mainly from abroad, was booked by the Public Communication Networks, Power Generation (KWU) and Transportation Systems Groups. Following this initial surge, orders are expected to ease off slightly during the remainder of the financial year.

In £m	1/10/89 to 31/12/89	1/10/90 to 31/12/90	Change
New orders	6,069	7,054	+ 16%
German business	2,570	3,048	+ 19%
International business	3,499	4,006	+ 14%

Sales

Sales increased 4% to £5,320m (1989/90: £5,116m). This somewhat modest rise compared with new orders reflects the final billing of several major projects in Germany in 1989/90. German domestic sales, at £2,425m, were at last year's level. International sales grew 7% to £2,895m (1989/90: £2,696m) mainly owing to the inclusion of new companies in the consolidated figures as well as strong sales in the Transportation Systems, Public Communication Networks,

and Industrial and Building Systems Groups. International sales would have been 3% higher but for the effect of the weaker U.S. dollar on the translated figures.

In \$m	1/10/89 to 31/12/89	1/10/90 to 31/12/90	Change
Sales	5,116	5,320	+ 4%
German business	2,420	2,425	0%
International business	2,696	2,895	+ 7%

Employees

The number of employees increased in the first quarter by a total of 33,000 or 9% to 406,000. While the work force in Germany rose 6% to 244,000, there was a 13% rise outside Germany to 162,000. This extraordinary increase was due entirely to the inclusion of new acquisitions. Personnel costs rose 12% from £2,236m to £2,509m.

In thousands	30/9/90	31/12/90	Change
Employees	373	406	+ 9%
German operations	230	244	+ 6%
International operations	143	162	+ 13%

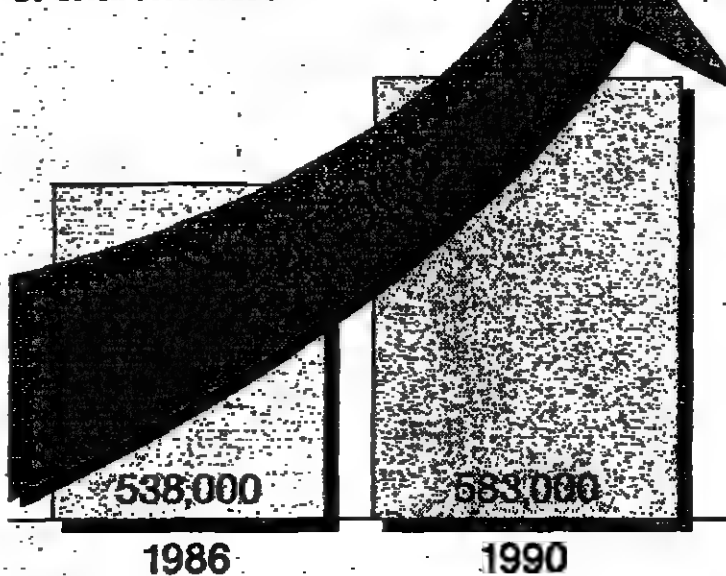
Capital spending and net income

Capital spending declined by 55% to £319m (1989/90: £703m) compared with the same period last year. Capital expenditure grew slightly; by contrast, there were fewer investments in other companies. Net income after taxes rose marginally to £131m (1989/90: £126m).

In £m	1/10/89 to 31/12/89	1/10/90 to 31/12/90	Change
Capital expenditure and investments	703	319	- 55%
Net income after taxes	126	131	+ 4%

All amounts translated at the Frankfurt middle rate on 31/12/1990: £1 = DM 2.885.

Number of shareholders



Siemens shares in demand

In 1989/90, Siemens shares were again the most actively traded securities on the eight German stock exchanges, with turnover of around DM180 billion. Shares worth a further DM50 billion were traded on the London stock exchange. Siemens shares are an attractive investment with the number of shareholders up by 45,000 over the past four years, as shown by a recent survey of shareholders. Over 580,000 shareholders have now placed their trust in Siemens' technical and competitive capability. Our growth record, profitability and financial strength are convincing arguments. There has been a particularly pronounced increase in the proportion of institutional investors abroad holding Siemens shares.

Siemens AG

In Great Britain: Siemens plc.
Siemens House, Windmill Road,
Sunbury-on-Thames, Middlesex, TW167HS

THE TIMES TUESDAY FEBRUARY 1968

The prices in this section refer to Friday's trading

MONEY MARKETS

OTHER STERLING RATES

Currency	Rate
Australian dollar	0.67
Bahian cruzeiro	100 = 1000
Brazilian cruzeiro	100 = 1000
Canadian dollar	0.95
Dutch guilder	1.67
French franc	6.55
German mark	3.36
Italian lira	2036
New Zealand dollar	0.47
Puerto Rican peso	100 = 1000
Sri Lankan rupee	150 = 1000
Taiwan dollar	24.6
Yen	360

DOLLAR SPOT RATES

Currency	Rate
Australian dollar	0.67
Bahian cruzeiro	100 = 1000
Brazilian cruzeiro	100 = 1000
Canadian dollar	0.95
Dutch guilder	1.67
French franc	6.55
German mark	3.36
Italian lira	2036
New Zealand dollar	0.47
Puerto Rican peso	100 = 1000
Sri Lankan rupee	150 = 1000
Taiwan dollar	24.6
Yen	360

Exchange Index compared with 1985 v						
STERLING SPOT AND FORWARD RATES						
	Range	Close	1 month	3 months		
Index Rates for Feb 11						
New York	1.9905-1.9980	1.9970-1.9980	1.18-1.11p	3.18-3.18p		
London	2.3000-2.3120	2.3000-2.3120	0.02-0.01p	1.14-1.07p		
Frankfurt	1.9870-2.0070	1.9970-2.0070	1.13-1.10p	3.13-3.10p		
Geneva	53.31-55.76	55.31-55.54	21-17p	83-87		
Brussels	11.0775-11.1725	11.0775-11.1325	81-84p	81-74p		
Paris	1.0870-1.0910	1.0870-1.0910	81-71p	81-74p		
Frankfurt	2.8542-2.8593	2.8542-2.8581	21-24p	21-24p		
London	2.5624-2.5631	2.5624-2.5644	23-26p	23-26p		
Brussels	1.0770-1.0847	1.0770-1.0847	40-40p	40-40p		
Paris	2168.74-2181.89	2169.74-2172.63	3-1p	5-3p		
Calcutta	11.3160-11.3535	11.3160-11.3448	51-57p	51-57p		
Delhi	2.8272-2.8278	2.8272-2.8278	51-57p	51-57p		
Tokyo	10.9557-10.9571	10.9557-10.9571	1-4p	11-11p		
Osaka	20.255-24.14	20.255-24.14	71-71p	80-77p		
Seoul	20.2525-20.4095	20.2525-20.3257	71-71p	80-77p		
Singapore	2.4689-2.4788	2.4689-2.4689	11-11p	31-31p		
Surabaya			Percent up or down	Percent up or down		

MONEY RATES (%)						
Three Month Clearing Bank 14	Finance Rate 14			Week Rate 14%		
Discount Market Loans: Overnight Rate: 14%	Low 14			Week Rate: 14%		
Free Money Bill (Monday): 2 days 12%, 12%, 12%, 12%, 12%, 12%						
	1 month	3 months	6 months	9 months	12 months	
Prime Bank Bill (Mon):	13%-13%	12%-12%	12%-12%	12%-12%	12%-12%	
Trade Bill (Tue):	14%	13%-13%	12%-12%	12%-12%	12%-12%	
Commercial Paper:	13%-13%	12%-12%	12%-12%	12%-12%	12%-12%	
Overnight: open 14%, close 14.						
Call Authority Depos:	14	n/a	13%	12%	12%	
Banking Cds:	14%-13%	13%-13%	13%-13%	12%-12%	12%-12%	
Commercial Paper:	14%-13%	13%-13%	13%-13%	12%-12%	12%-12%	
Banking Society Cds:	14-13%	13%-13%	13%-13%	12%-12%	12%-12%	

EUROPEAN MONEY DEPOSITS (%)						
Current	7 day	1 month	3 months	6 months	9 months	Call
London	6%-6%	6%-6%	6%-6%	6%-6%	6%-6%	6%-6%
Frankfurt	6%-6%	6%-6%	6%-6%	6%-6%	6%-6%	6%-6%
Paris	6%-6%	6%-6%	6%-6%	6%-6%	6%-6%	6%-6%
Brussels	6%-6%	6%-6%	6%-6%	6%-6%	6%-6%	6%-6%
Geneva	6%-6%	6%-6%	6%-6%	6%-6%	6%-6%	6%-6%
Calcutta	6%-6%	6%-6%	6%-6%	6%-6%	6%-6%	6%-6%
Delhi	6%-6%	6%-6%	6%-6%	6%-6%	6%-6%	6%-6%
Tokyo	6%-6%	6%-6%	6%-6%	6%-6%	6%-6%	6%-6%
Osaka	6%-6%	6%-6%	6%-6%	6%-6%	6%-6%	6%-6%
Seoul	6%-6%	6%-6%	6%-6%	6%-6%	6%-6%	6%-6%
Singapore	6%-6%	6%-6%	6%-6%	6%-6%	6%-6%	6%-6%
Surabaya	6%-6%	6%-6%	6%-6%	6%-6%	6%-6%	6%-6%

GOLD AND PRECIOUS METALS						
(Bret & Co)						
Gold	Open \$369.00-369.00	Close \$369.75-369.75	Naga \$369.00-369.00	Open \$369.00-369.00	Close \$369.00-369.00	Open \$369.00-369.00
Silver	Open \$369.75-369.75	Close \$369.75-369.75	Naga \$369.00-369.00	Open \$369.00-369.00	Close \$369.00-369.00	Open \$369.00-369.00
Platinum	Open \$690.00-690.00	Close \$690.00-690.00	Naga \$690.00-690.00	Open \$690.00-690.00	Close \$690.00-690.00	Open \$690.00-690.00
Palladium	Open \$240.00-240.00	Close \$240.00-240.00	Naga \$240.00-240.00	Open \$240.00-240.00	Close \$240.00-240.00	Open \$240.00-240.00
Rhodium	Open \$450.00-450.00	Close \$450.00-450.00	Naga \$450.00-450.00	Open \$450.00-450.00	Close \$450.00-450.00	Open \$450.00-450.00

OTHER STERLING RATES		DOLLAR SPOT RATES	
Argentina austral*	1798.95-1800.21	Interbank	1.8345-1.8380
Australia dollar	2.5032-2.5050	Malaysia	1.7082-1.7097
Bahrain dirham	4.4431-4.4437	Singapore	2.9095-2.9098
Brazil cruzeiro	2.0000-2.0007	South Africa	1.7003-1.7004
Cyprus pound	0.898-0.894	Sweden	1.1589-1.1591
Poland marka	7.038-7.035	Switzerland	5.4500-5.4500
British pound	1.0000-1.0000	Denmark	5.7400-5.7400
Hong Kong dollar	16.5490-16.5580	Norway	5.7400-5.7400
Indian rupee	57.45-45.47	West Germany	1.4480-1.4480
Israeli sheqel	1.0000-1.0000	France	1.1000-1.1000
Malaysia ringgit	2.8000-2.8000	Netherlands	1.6320-1.6330
Maltese dollar	1.0000-1.0000	Belgium	1.0000-1.0000
New Zealand dollar	3.1219-3.1214	Italy	1.0000-1.0000
Saudi Arabia riyal	2.0000-2.0000	Japan (Tokyo)	1.0000-1.0000
Sri Lanka rupee	4.6710-4.6710	South Korea	1.0000-1.0000
S Africa rand (fin)	8.2100-8.2107	Hong Kong	1.0000-1.0000
S Africa rand (com)	5.0000-5.0000	Thailand	1.0000-1.0000
T A I A dollar	1.0000-1.0000	Philippines	1.0000-1.0000
Antigua bank \$/US	1.0000-1.0000	Australia	1.0000-1.0000
Antigua bank \$/US	1.0000-1.0000		

ECOD: Flood Rate Sterling Export Finance. Make-up date: Dec 81. 1980 Agreed rates Jan 26, 1991 to Feb 25, 1991 Scheme 1: 14.54%, Scheme 2: 14.51%, 15.00%. Reference rate Dec 1, 1980 to Dec 31, 1990 Scheme 4: 15.345%.

LONDON FINANCIAL FUTURES						
	Period	Open	High	Low	Close	Volume
FT-SE 100	Mar 91	2282.0	2300.0	2280.0	2290.0	4688
Previous open interest: 23185	Mar 91				2280.0	0
	Mar 91				2280.0	0
Three Month Sterling	Mar 91	87.12	87.14	86.98	86.97	37313
Previous open interest: 149,108	Mar 91	86.98	87.07	86.98	86.93	33268
	Mar 91	86.98	87.07	86.98	86.93	33268
Three Month Eurodollar	Mar 91	93.34	93.39	93.34	93.34	1108
Previous open interest: 93274	Mar 91	93.45	93.47	93.44	93.44	1118
Three Month Euro DM	Mar 91	90.81	90.81	90.81	90.81	1118
Previous open interest: 93277	Mar 91	91.17	91.18	91.08	91.08	9761
US Treasury Bond	Mar 91	90.98	90.97	90.97	90.97	9091
Previous open interest: 72899	Mar 91	90.98	90.97	90.97	90.97	9091
Long Gilt	Mar 91	92.05	92.05	92.04	92.04	10749
Previous open interest: 42459	Mar 91	92.10	92.08	92.04	92.04	10749
Japanese Govt Bond	Mar 91	90.87	90.88	90.87	90.87	607
Previous open interest: 653	Mar 91	90.87	90.88	90.87	90.87	607
German Govt Bond	Mar 91	90.21	90.23	90.21	90.21	607
Previous open interest: 10494	Mar 91	90.43	90.45	90.27	90.30	1051
Three month ECU	Mar 91	90.12	90.15	90.03	90.08	189
Previous open interest: 2191	Mar 91	90.12	90.15	90.03	90.08	189

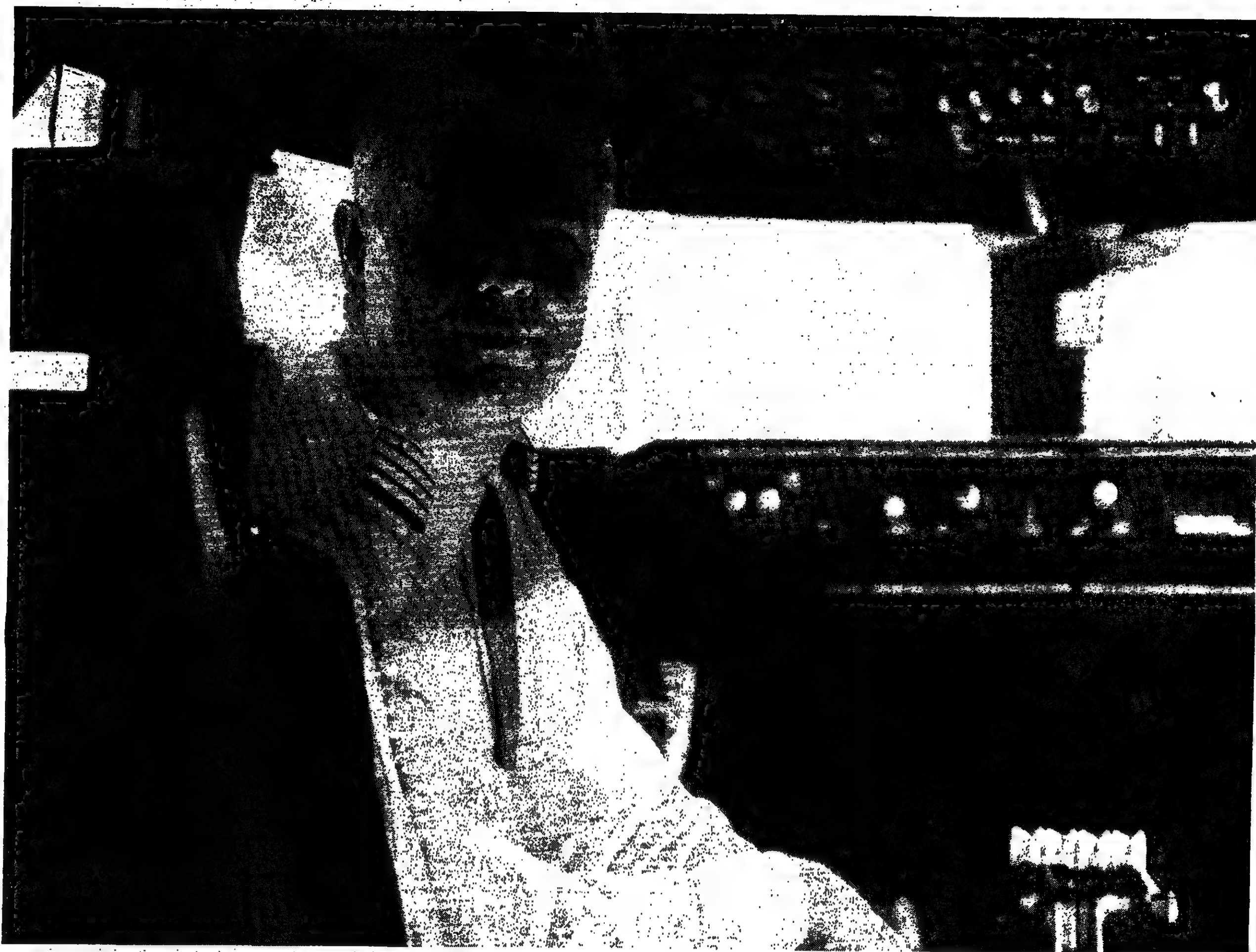
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Water bugs to fight pollution

GROUND-BREAKING and long-term solutions to cut waste and contamination are the main aim of a clean technology unit that is a joint venture between the Science and Engineering Research Council (SERC) and the Agricultural and Food Research Council (AFRC).

The unit, opened last summer, is talking to academic institutions with a research slant on waste and industrial companies, which find themselves at the sharp end in dealing with problems (Derek Harris writes).

Some industries are more closely involved than others, particularly those in chemical processing, energy production and farming and food.

Dr Nick Lawrence, formerly with SERC and now director of the unit, says: "We are probably not talking about how better to clean up smoke stacks, although it is always possible that a new way of scrubbing the emissions from them might come up."

"It would be better if we could get offending sulphur out of the coal before it goes to a power station for burning. It would be even better if we did not have to burn the coal in the first place because another entirely new fueling solution has been found."

Among the likely candidates for concentrated study are sectors such as clean energy, alternatives to petrochemicals, and improved technology to detect low concentrations of contaminants in liquids. Food production and agricultural systems will be the focus of recent health alarms.

The unit will also be channelling funds to promising research projects. In the last academic year, to 1990, about £3.3 million went to research projects which had some cleaning-up element.

Among current projects getting funding is one at Southampton university which is looking at a biological means of removing heavy metals from contaminated water. It employs bugs sensitive to a magnetic field.

At Birmingham university, new ways of stopping water leaching through landfill waste sites and getting into drinking water supplies are being studied. A heat pump, which uses an ozone-friendly refrigerant, is under investigation at Loughborough university.

The unit's main preoccupation will be the invention of totally new processes, but it will also look for improvements to existing processes and take account of technologies aimed at cleaning up the pollution from the past.

At the AFRC one promising line of enquiry is the production of oil seed that could be used as a fuel supplement in power stations.

The oil seed would not add to the carbon dioxide in the atmosphere because, as the product of plant growth, it would be absorbing such gases produced by burning.



A hole worth a mint to the industry: Hugh Morrison (left) and Robert Biffa, of Biffa Waste Services, survey a landfill site in Redhill, Surrey

Cleaning up a fortune

New environmental legislation is prompting waste disposal operators to eliminate the cowboys from a business that is worth £4 billion and beating the recession, Derek Harris says

Recession is having an impact on the waste management business, but is only slowing the rate of growth. The industry's value is between £2 billion and £4 billion.

The Confederation of British Industry (CBI) believes that industry and commerce produce about 100 million tons of waste annually, worth £3 billion to the trade. But the CBI has joined with the trade and industry department in urging manufacturers to cut waste.

There are another 20 million tons or so of domestic waste, three-quarters of which is collected by local authorities and the rest by private contractors, who are now expanding their market share.

Marketing Strategies for Industry (UK), the market research organisation, in its latest report on the waste management industry, puts the value of domestic waste collection, based on industry estimates, as approaching £1 billion this year. MSI puts the private contractors' share at about a fifth, but describes their chances of growth as "exceptional".

Martin Bettington, the deputy managing director at Biffa Waste Services, which is part of the BET industrial services group, controls an organisation which is one of the biggest nationally spread private sector operations in the waste business. Another with a big national presence is Cleanaway, jointly owned by the GKN engineering and industrial services group and Australia's Brambles haulage and services group.

Mr Bettington says: "The waste industry will weather the recession better than most other sectors. We shall be seeing a slowing down on the heavy industrial side and company failures will exact a toll, especially in light engineering."

New environmental protection legislation in the UK imposes a duty of care on those involved in waste disposal, from source to eventual resting place. The law should banish the cowboy operators and fly-tipping. The expense, reflecting more realistically the cost of disposal, will lead the die against thousands of smaller operations. Companies will have to invest in high productivity machinery and maintaining an adequate land-fill bank, increasingly an expensive operation. Land-fill costs have been rising 20 per cent a year.

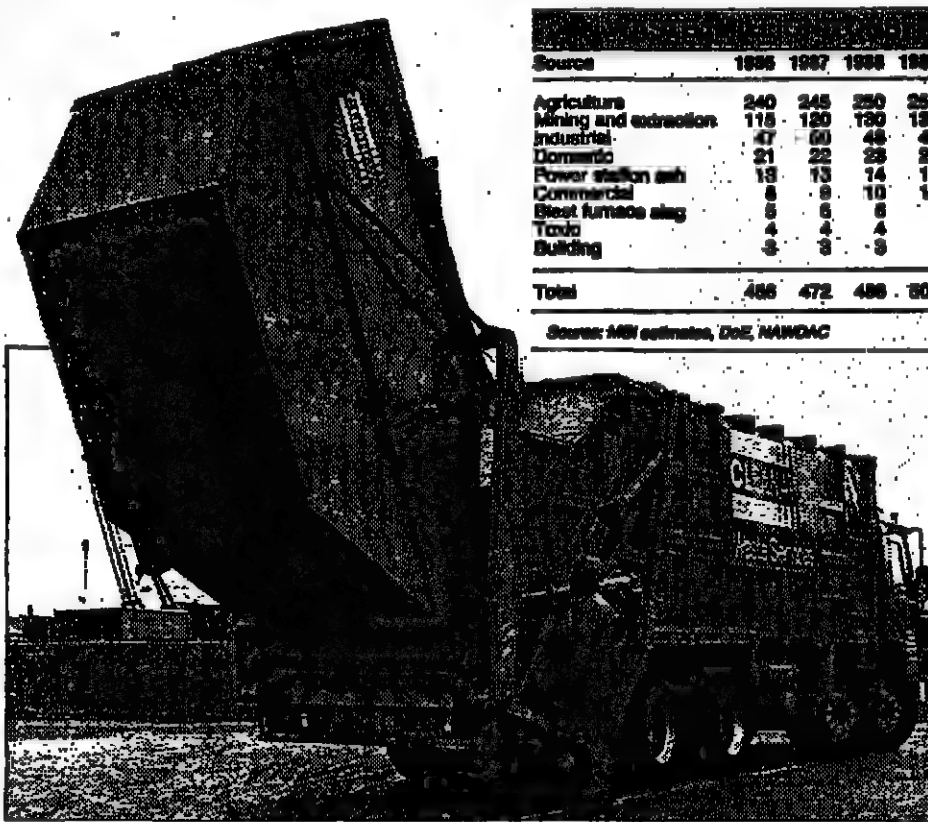
Fewer than a dozen companies now control a quarter of the market. They include Shankar & McKean, whose vast landfill sites in Bedfordshire are filled with rubbish transported by train from London, the Caird Group, Ocean Environmental (part of Ocean Transport and Trading), Hales Waste Control (part of RMC), Attwoods and Tarmac Econowaste. Blue Circle Industries and Wimpey are two other household names with subsidiaries in the industry. NFC, the former National Freight, has a waste operation and Rentokil is a recent entrant.

Growth by acquisition or joint venture looks increasingly likely. Last autumn, Leigh Industries, in the West Midlands, made an agreed bid for HT Hughes, of Portsmouth.

Waste Management, of the United States, one of the world's biggest companies in waste management, has announced a £125 million joint venture with Wessex Water, one of the smaller UK water companies, to exploit waste management opportunities in the UK. The partnership will exploit high temperature burning in the UK as a means of reducing waste volumes as the costs of land-fill sites spiral.

Biffa has a joint venture with Volund of Denmark for mass incineration of a scale which could cope with rubbish mountains.

Such large incineration plants for the UK have already started opposition. The waste industry regards the forthcoming judgment from the environment department on the public enquiry into a Cleveland incineration plant plan in the northeast as a test case.



Little and large: this vehicle, which costs £150,000, compresses waste to save space

Source	1986	1987	1988	1989
Agriculture	840	845	850	855
Mining and extraction	115	120	125	130
Industrial	47	50	48	47
Domestic	21	22	23	24
Power station ash	13	13	14	14
Commercial	8	8	10	10
Best furnace slag	5	5	5	5
Tinns	4	4	4	4
Building	2	2	2	2
Total	1064	1072	1088	1097

Source: MHI estimates, ONS, WARDAC

Taking a lead in salvage

LEEDS city council, a recycling trail-blazer because of its early involvement in can and paper banks, has just completed the first three months of another waste collection experiment which could set a trend for the United Kingdom.

It follows a pilot trial involving 100 houses where householders sorted their domestic waste into four categories to boost the amount being recycled (Derek Harris writes). All were volunteers and their keenness resulted in 90 per cent of the household refuse being sorted out for recycling.

One category was for dry recyclable materials such as paper, cardboard and textiles. Another was organic kitchen and garden waste which could be composted. A third category included plastics, drink cartons, batteries and metal cans. The fourth category was non-recyclable waste.

Earlier local authority trials in Bury, Lancashire, had shown that if bottles were included too many were broken. That caused a sorting problem because glass for recycling needs to be colour graded.

Now Leeds has expanded its trial to an inner city area covering 4,000 homes. The scheme relies on people taking bottles to bottle banks, the numbers of which have been increased so that they are within convenient reach of all households.

Geoff Wright, project manager for the scheme, says: "We thought, originally, that when the scheme was given this real test we would get between 50 per cent and 70 per cent recovery for recycling, but on some recyclables the recovery has been up to 90 per cent."

Two twin-compartment bins are used, one green and the other brown. One of the bins is collected one week and the other the following week.

In a recent two-week period Leeds collected 25 tons of dry recyclables, eight tons of organic waste and about ten tons of glass from the nearby bottle banks. Thirty-five tons were taken to waste tips; 55 per cent of the waste went for recycling.

"Over the past three months we have noticed a gradual improvement as people have become better acquainted with the system," Mr Wright says. The council hopes a city-wide scheme will recover between 60 and 75 per cent of waste.

It puts into perspective the Government's national target of ensuring that 25 per cent of present rubbish waste goes for recycling. The Leeds system, which demands specialist vehicles as well as extra large tailor-made wheeler bins, is more expensive than other methods. However, the constant rise in traditional disposal costs could erode the cost differential.

Britain gets its first can recycling plant

A SURGE of investment by companies in improved waste management, including a drive to recycling, has been emerging in the United Kingdom as the costs of waste disposal continue to rise (Derek Harris writes).

Among the bigger investments in recycling in the past year is £20 million being spent by British Alcan Aluminium to produce Europe's first

drinks can recycling plant. The plant is now being built at its BA Alloys works near Warrington in the northwest and will be in production early next year.

Up to 40 per cent of aluminium products in the UK are already recycled but this falls short of recovery rates in many countries. Worldwide, recycling rates exceed 50 per cent.

ICI, Britain's biggest industrial producer, has brought in a series of initiatives. It has pioneered a new environmentally benign process which removes the need for mercury when producing chlorine and caustic soda. A conversion programme costing about £100 million will yield anti-pollution advantages and energy savings to justify the investment.

ICI is spending about £80 million on two new ammonia plants at Bristol, exploiting a breakthrough in production which ICI is licensing worldwide. If all ammonia plants around the globe went over to this system it would achieve a reduction in nitrogen oxide emissions equivalent to taking 5 million cars off the road, according to ICI.

A new £110 million methyl methacrylate (MMA) plant on Teesside is boosting production and eliminating the dumping at sea of waste, which includes ammonium sulphate and hydrochloric acid.

ICI has also spent £100 million on research and development of refrigerant to replace the chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) thought to be harmful to the ozone layer.

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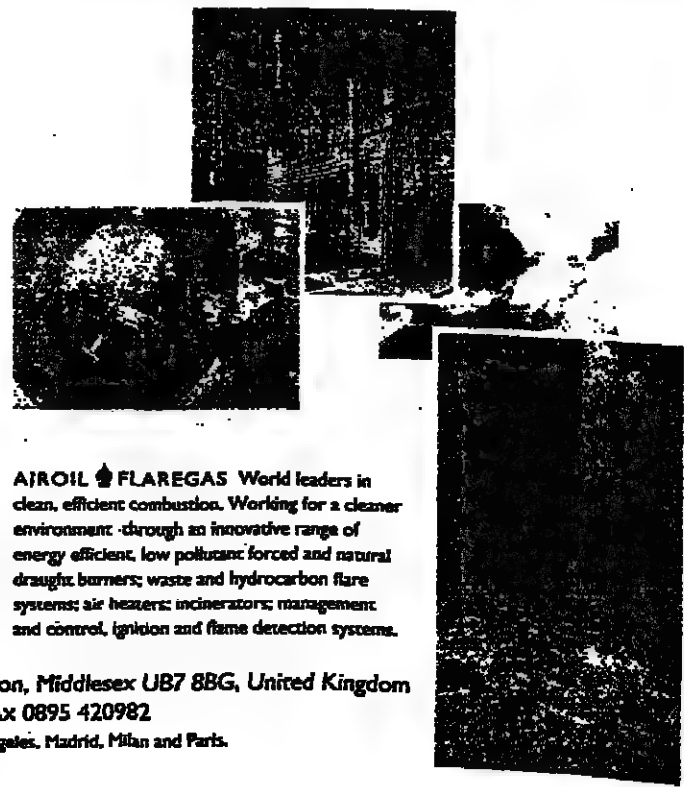
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The "silver bullet" plant at Donureay, which can dispose of dangerous waste products

Turning plastic into grass

New inventions could produce useful materials from recycled plastics or tyres, and a safe way of destroying toxic waste. Malcolm Brown reports

Science is now helping the waste industry to solve some of its most intractable problems. Two areas of particular concern are toxic waste and plastics. Disposing of poisonous waste is technically difficult and under constant public scrutiny.

Plastics present a different problem. They are omnipresent in modern society, do not degrade naturally and are difficult to recycle. However, recent developments in scientific laboratories suggest solutions in both these areas.

Recycling is the acceptable face of waste management, but certain materials, particularly plastics, have been difficult to recycle because there are so many different types, each usually incompatible with the others.

You can make alloys with different types of metals, but few plastics mix well. Experience has shown that even if different types can be blended, the result tends to be a low-grade material with poor mechanical properties.

But now a Dutch engineer, Ben van der Groep, has come up with a so-called "compatibiliser", known as Bennet, which enables many different types of plastics to mix with one another to produce new polymer materials. The specialist journal, *Materials Reclamation Weekly*, describes the compatibiliser's molecular structure as octopus-like.

"Each 'tentacle' grabs a different polymer in the surrounding mixture," the journal says, "and in this way Bennet forms innumerable chemical bridges between the constituent polymers."

The material, which is now being

supplied in Britain, could have many different uses. Polyethylene and polypropylene have been combined to make artificial grass and the inventor has even managed to combine successfully a 50-50 mixture of polymers and ground-down car tyres.

The rule for toxic waste used to be "bury it or burn it". But there are risks and difficulties with both techniques. Poisonous materials dumped in landfills can seep into the underlying water courses and when wastes are incinerated, incomplete combustion may allow potentially dangerous substances to be released into the atmosphere.

The latter problem is seen at its most acute with polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), non-biodegradable chemicals which were once widely used in electrical equipment. They are so dangerous that only a few special incinerators in Britain are licensed to burn them.

Now a simple electrochemical way of dealing with such materials has been developed by scientists at the Donureay facility of AEA Technology, the commercial arm of the Atomic Energy Authority. Ironically, although the so-called "silver bullet" process works perfectly, the organisation's own environment and energy division has withdrawn active support for it, mainly because the commercial risks seem too great. The

Donureay researchers are still hoping for outside commercial backers.

The silver bullet process was discovered almost by accident. Dr David Steele, the deputy manager of chemical processes at Donureay, was actually trying to recover nuclear fuel from plutonium-containing fuel pellets which had fallen below manufacturing specification.

To break down the highly insoluble plutonium oxide, he used a technique developed in America — he put it in an electrochemical cell with nitric acid and a small amount of silver salt, and passed a current through the mixture.

The plutonium dissolved while the silver was regenerated — meaning that it could be used over and over again. It then occurred to Dr Steele that the process might also be used to solve quite a different problem, the treatment of organic material contaminated with low-grade nuclear waste, such as the tissues and rubber gloves used by nuclear scientists.

In experiments with contaminated tissues in the same sort of electrochemical cell, the tissue material was oxidised to carbon dioxide and water. The radioactive substances were dissolved and could be recovered later, to be re-used or disposed of.

The real surprise came with the

discovery that at slightly higher temperatures the process would work on much less reactive organic material than this. Ultimately, the scientists found they could deal with everything from rubber gloves to epoxy resins and lubricating oils.

Then the researchers realised the process could be used even more widely. It could be used to break down and destroy a wide variety of non-radioactive organic wastes such as PCBs, chlorinated solvents, chlorophenols and pesticide residues which would normally require very high temperature incineration.

The project was initially backed by the environmental and energy division, says Dr William Batey, manager of Donureay's process technology department, but, since that division withdrew, his own division, the decommissioning and radioactive waste unit, had taken over responsibility for both the nuclear side of the project and the non-nuclear.

Dr Batey says: "We are busy trying to arrange commercial relationships with outside companies to go forward on both nuclear and non-nuclear sides." If, for example, they could find a commercial partner for the destruction of PCBs, the project would "still be a runner". The main problem, of course, is that incineration is cheaper.

"We are trying to push our process as an environmentally acceptable one. We produce carbon dioxide and water and inorganic acids. It is not a high-temperature process, so we do not produce more toxic compounds in the destruction process than we started with and that is the problem with incineration."

A green screen for big business

THE IDRA of environmental audits, which started in America as a way to ensure companies complied with the barrage of regulations being issued by the Environmental Protection Agency, is now catching on in Britain (Malcolm Brown writes).

A growing number of big companies is calling in specialists to give them what amounts to an environmental health check. The big firms of accountants or their associated management consultancies have quickly established themselves in the field.

Simon Powell, a manager in the environmental business unit set up last year in the consultancy arm of Coopers & Lybrand Deloitte, says the firm has already carried out half a dozen environmental audits and is talking to more companies. The auditor investigates the impact the company is having on the environment and measures it against standards agreed with the client. There are three levels of criteria, Mr Powell says. The first and lowest is "negative compliance". This is where companies want to know whether they are breaking the law. The second is what Powell calls "positive compliance". Mr Powell explains: "They want to know whether they are breaking the law. They also want to know whether they are doing things well."

At the third level, the company may be setting itself performance targets which it then asks the auditor to measure the company against. At this level, businesses are very much "wanting to be seen to be green", Mr Powell says.

Companies are also recognising that being more environmentally responsible can bring positive benefits. "Waste minimisation reduces costs. Energy efficiency is not only environment-friendly but reduces costs."

One of the biggest issues is whether there should be greater public exposure for environmental audits. Some companies, such as Norsk Hydro (following the lead of its Norwegian parent) and Caird, the waste manage-

ment group, are making their audits public, but the counter-argument is that keeping the results of audits private increases the likelihood of real improvements being made.

It is certainly likely to be a long time before the introduction of any kind of legal requirement to disclose detailed environmental information publicly.

"One of the difficulties of environment is that it covers an enormous range of issues," says David Pimm, a senior auditing manager in the accountancy arm of Deloitte. "One company might be pushing things out of a smokestack, another pouring things in a river, while for others it could be a matter of noise, or use of resources," he says. "I think we have a way to go before we can specify what are the issues that ought to be reported on."

Although the publication of detailed audits may be some time away, there is a growing trend among companies to publish in their annual reports at least brief details of environmental policy and sometimes performance.

One area in which environmental audits are becoming more prominent is so-called due diligence investigations, in which American or continental companies acquiring British businesses want to be sure no environmental "skeletons" are lurking in the cupboards of the company about to be gained. The fear is that by acquiring a company, the buyer may be inheriting a costly problem.

American legislation imposes strict liability on companies to clear up the pollution they have caused. One British institution now in the middle of an environmental audit is the National Westminster bank. Initially, the audit will concentrate on things such as the bank's use of resources, but NatWest officials realise that impending EC legislation, if it is like the United States laws, could have another kind of impact. In America, banks lending to companies that cause environmental problems can themselves be liable.



Big issue: David Pimm

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Just cause without a monopoly

The solicitor who has worked on a case is best qualified to defend it, Robert Winstanley writes

LEGAL BRIEF

An article on this page (January 28) by Anthony Scrivener, the chairman of the Bar, about the case of Mr Robinson, who had to defend himself on a capital charge in Jamaica, made distressing reading. Those days are long past in the UK and will never return.

Yet such a situation might have arisen here in the 19th century, and even well into the 20th century. Many defendants on serious charges in our assize courts went unrepresented because they could not afford the fees of those with a monopoly on the right to represent them in our higher courts. Remember also that in very recent history the Bar's principle of accepting any case, however unpopular, was subject to the right to refuse it unless a proper fee was agreed.

The Bar's recent rule change preventing a barrister from refusing a case because it is on legal aid cannot be entirely a coincidence as it has come just as the Courts and Legal Services Act 1990 presents the greatest threat in modern times to the Bar's monopoly on rights of audience in the higher courts.

Cases like those of Mr Robinson in Britain, however, have not been banished by this monopoly, but by our legal aid system. Whatever its deficiencies, it can fairly be described as comprehensive in

the opportunity it offers to those of limited means, and sometimes not so limited means, to be represented when facing serious charges.

No barrister appears in such a case without being instructed by a solicitor. Therefore, justice for those appearing before our criminal courts is not the monopoly of the Bar. There is no defendant, however unpopular, who cannot find a solicitor to represent him.

Who carried the torch for the Guildford Four during their imprisonment? Solicitors such as Alastair Logan and Gareth Peirce kept hope alive and for much of the time

worked without remuneration. Who fights with the conglomerates for the increasing number of victims of disasters such as the King's Cross fire? The answer is solicitors such as Rodger Pannone and Patrick Allen. They do not refuse clients because they are on legal aid.

Conducting this discussion in terms of capital murder charges is unrealistic. The Bar's not too hidden agenda in its newly found commitment to legal aid is to preserve its advocacy monopoly rights.

An everyday example in these courts is that of a young man facing a burglary charge, which could lead to the loss of

his liberty. If he pleads guilty, his chances of being represented by a barrister who has read the papers in his case more than 24 hours before the hearing are probably less than 20 per cent. The barrister who appears is likely to be young and inexperienced.

Mr Scrivener says he and the Bar are committed to ensuring that legal aid does not give a second-class service. It is difficult to understand why this commitment does not embrace an acknowledgement that the young man accused of burglary may be best represented by a solicitor who has prepared his case over the weeks

and months, who knows all the facts, and who has met him before.

This solicitor will have had day-in and day-out experience of representing such young men in the magistrates' courts. This solicitor, and thousands like him, provide the vast bulk of representation to those who need and claim it under our legal aid system.

That is the real commitment to the legal aid system that keeps it functioning in our police stations 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and in our courts six days a week. I have no doubt that talented men such as Mr Scrivener justifiably earn a great deal of

money for giving clients the high level of legal skill at their disposal.

They cannot, however, claim that by taking on the occasional high-profile legally aided case they will ensure the preservation of a high-quality legal aid system and justice for the common man. The reality is that if a member of the Bar does not wish to take a case his clerk can say he is too busy. It is impossible to know whether or not this is the genuine reason for refusal.

The so-called "cab rank" rule exists only in the minds of its proponents. In the real world, nobody can check whether it is observed.

Who would deny the praiseworthy objective of ensuring that legal aid is not a second-class service? All of us who work in the system agree that it should be extended to tribunals and that the terms of work for those supplying the service should be improved.

The way ahead, though, is not to preserve the Bar's monopoly, but to ensure that the only qualifications required to represent somebody in court are proper training, skill and experience. Only then will defendants have the wide choice of advice and representation and the best chance of receiving justice.

The author is a duty solicitor in Islington, north London, and a member of the council of the Law Society.



Free: Gerard Conlon, one of the Guildford Four. Right: Alastair Logan, who, with Gareth Peirce, prepared the case

Law Report February 12 1991 Court of Appeal

Industrial tribunal award is not set off against High Court damages

O'Loire v Jackel International Ltd

Before Sir Nicolas Browne-Wilkinson, Vice-Chancellor, Lord Justice Stuart-Smith and Lord Justice Leggatt

Computation of damages recoverable in a common law action for wrongful dismissal should not take account of an industrial tribunal award, on a claim for unfair dismissal arising from the same events, of the statutory maximum of £8,000, the actual loss exceeding that maximum.

The Court of Appeal so held when allowing in part an appeal by the plaintiff, Mr Aogus O'Loire, from the order made on July 11, 1989 by Mr George Newman, QC, sitting as a deputy judge of the High Court, whereby he awarded the

plaintiff damages of £9,495.44 against the defendants, Jackel International Ltd.

The defendants summarily dismissed the plaintiff from his employment on October 2, 1986. Subsequently an industrial tribunal held that the dismissal was unfair and awarded him the statutory maximum of £8,000 allowable as ordinary compensation under the Employment Protection (Consolidation) Act 1978, together with an additional award of £4,030 for failure to reinstate him.

In an action for wrongful dismissal the plaintiff claimed for loss of salary and benefits, compensation for increased difficulty in obtaining re-employment due to the manner of his dismissal and damages for the distress, inconvenience and

injury to his feelings and that of his family occasioned by the dismissal, in respect of loss of salary he alleged that his appointment as deputy managing director carried with it a contractual entitlement to be appointed managing director on retirement of the current incumbent.

The judge held, *inter alia*, that: (i) there was no contractual obligation to appoint the plaintiff as managing director; (ii) the plaintiff was entitled to damages for loss of salary for only six months at the rate appropriate to a deputy managing director; (iii) the plaintiff had no right to damages for loss of his reputation or injury to his feelings; and (iv) the industrial tribunal's £8,000 maximum award had to be brought into account and set off against the damages recoverable at common law for loss of

earnings during the six-month period.

Mr O'Loire in person; Mr Michael Supperstone for Jackel.

THE VICE-CHANCELLOR said that it would be apparent that the question whether or not the plaintiff had a legally enforceable right to be appointed managing director in succession to the current incumbent was central to the computation of damages. Moreover, since the plaintiff relied upon the decisions of the industrial tribunal as having conclusively decided that point in his favour, it was essential to identify exactly what the industrial tribunal had decided.

It was not in dispute that decisions by an industrial tribunal could give rise to an estoppel. The question was whether the defendants were

estopped from denying that the plaintiff had a contractual right to be appointed as managing director. It was in his Lordship's judgment clear that the industrial tribunal had held that there had been a contractual right to become managing director. His Lordship therefore held that the defendants were estopped from denying that the plaintiff had been contractually entitled to be appointed managing director as successor to the current incumbent.

In his Lordship's judgment the plaintiff was fortunate in that case. He had no doubt that the industrial tribunal's decision was wrong and that there was in fact no contractual entitlement to be made managing director. At best, the contractual obligation would have been that, at the date of contract, the defendants

had a bona fide intention to make the plaintiff managing director on the retirement of the current incumbent.

On the question of damages for loss of earnings and injury to feelings, his Lordship had no doubt that the decision of the House of Lords in *Adams v Lindsell* (1990) AC 488 excluded those factors from being taken into account. The only exception to that rule arose in the case of contracts of apprenticeship.

The plaintiff had said that the circumstances of employment and attitudes had changed since the decision in *Adams*. That was true, but unless and until the House of Lords reconsidered that decision it was binding on the court. The judge had held that the maximum award of £8,000 made by the industrial tribunal had to be deducted from the

damages otherwise recoverable for loss of earnings and other benefits in the action for wrongful dismissal.

That was a point which fell to be decided in accordance with principle. In his Lordship's judgment the starting point was to identify the principle upon which the defendants sought to rely.

Mr Supperstone had accepted that the only principle on which he could rely was the rule against double recovery for the same loss. If that rule was to be invoked, the first requirement was to show that the plaintiff would be obtaining compensation under two heads for the same loss.

But the defendants were unable to satisfy that requirement. The industrial tribunal had not, and could not, allocate the £8,000 maximum award to any one of the particular elements

which together made up the total loss of £100,700 which they had found the plaintiff to have suffered.

Therefore in his Lordship's judgment, since the defendant could not prove a double recovery, there was no basis for setting off the maximum award against the common law damages.

He would allow the appeal to the extent that (a) the plaintiff's damages should be increased by calculating his loss of earnings for one month at the salary rate of the deputy managing director and five months at the rate held by the tribunal to be the salary of the managing director; (b) the damages should not be reduced by £8,000.

Lord Justice Stuart-Smith and Lord Justice Leggatt agreed. Solicitors: Taylor Joynson Garrett.

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No duty on chairman to raise out of time application

Dimitis v Westminster City Council

Before Mr Justice Knox, Mr J. A. Powell and Mr S. M. Springer

[Judgment January 23]

There was no obligation on the chairman of an industrial tribunal to raise the question whether an applicant, whose representative was aware that he was out of time in respect of one of his complaints of racial discrimination, wished to apply, pursuant to section 68(6) of the Race Relations Act 1976, to have it heard out of time.

The Employment Appeal Tribunal so held (Mr Springer dissenting) in dismissing an appeal by the applicant, George Gebre Dimitis, from the rejection by a London industrial tribunal on February 23, 1989, of his complaints that Westminster City Council had discriminated against him on racial grounds in May and June 1988 and had subjected him to discrimination by way of victimisation at an interview in July 1988.

Mr Goolbsen Meenan for the applicant; Mr Martin Kurrein for the council.

MR JUSTICE KNOX said that the originating application, presented on September 19, 1988, relied on two interviews, one in May 1988 the other in June 1988, as occasions on which there had been racial discrimination.

When the matter came on for hearing a trade union official appearing for the applicant said that one of the major complaints was out of time. The chairman said that the tribunal could not exclude the evidence because it was background.

In a subsequent affidavit the

trade union official said that he had not known about the provision in section 68(6) of the 1976 Act and that, had it been drawn to his attention, he would have made an application pursuant to it.

In *Kumchik v Derby County Council* (1978) ICR 1116 it was made abundantly clear that there was no general duty on the chairman of an industrial tribunal to raise points on behalf of a party which the party's representative did not raise.

Nevertheless, it was submitted that in the particular circumstances of the case, the chairman should have raised the question of whether the applicant wished to apply under section 68(6) for an extension of the time limit.

In the view of the majority, the case fell within the general principle that a point not taken in the pleadings and not taken in the Employment Appeal Tribunal, even though the failure to take it had been due to the lack of skill or experience of the advocate and that the omission could have been made good had the tribunal chosen to suggest it.

The issues arising on an application under section 68(6) were not the same as those arising under the substantive application.

The chairman could not be blamed for inferring from the fact that the applicant's representative volunteered the information that he was out of time in respect of one complaint that he was also aware of the power to extend time.

Further, the jurisdiction was intended to provide a speedy remedy, and the taking of fresh points on appeal militated against that. Responsibility

regarding the failure to make an application under section 68(6) lay on the applicant's side.

It was important that the principles set out in *Kumchik*'s case should be upheld and not eroded by qualifications based on circumstances which a chairman of an industrial tribunal might make.

It could not be said that the chairman had erred in law in dealing with the matter as he did.

The second issue on the appeal concerned an interview in July 1988. In the originating application and particulars the applicant alleged that the council's acting director of property services had threatened that pursuing an allegation of racial discrimination would adversely affect the applicant's future and that he could be used for calling people racist.

In the view of the majority, the issue arose solely on the question whether the industrial tribunal was correct in considering only the actions identified in the pleadings as constituting the victimisation, or whether it should have gone on to consider, in the light of *Asiz v Trinity Street Taxis Ltd* (1989) QB 463 other events in relation to the interview which the majority had found did happen, notwithstanding the fact that they were not identified or relied on before the tribunal.

The tribunal's finding was to adjudicate on the issues before it and that it did. It was not under a duty to investigate other possible complaints even though arising out of the same incident, unless it was asked to do so.

Solicitors: Bruce Piper & Co; Mr G. M. Ives, Westminster.

Policeman lay in wait for driver after anonymous telephone call

DPP v Wilson

Before Lord Justice Lloyd and Mr Justice Tudor Evans

[Judgment January 31]

The fact a police officer's reason to believe that a person was driving with excess alcohol was based on an anonymous telephone call rather than on the standard of driving did not amount to malpractice and did not therefore entitle magistrates to exercise their discretion under section 78 of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 to exclude all the evidence following arrest.

The Queen's Bench Divisional Court so held in allowing a prosecutor's appeal by way of case stated against the decision of Stirling Justices on December 19, 1989 to exercise their discretion under section 78 and exclude evidence of the blood/alcohol analysis. The case was remitted to the justices.

Mr Timothy J. Spencer for the prosecution; Mr Peter Dean for the defendant.

MR JUSTICE TUDOR EVANS said that an information had been preferred by the prosecution against the defendant that he had driven a motor vehicle on a road after consuming so much alcohol that the proportion of it in his breath had exceeded the prescribed limit contrary to section 5 of the Road Traffic Act 1988.

Justices heard the information and found, *inter alia*, that as a consequence of an anonymous telephone call a police officer went to a place where he expected a car to be on the move at any minute and he would catch a driver who had been drinking.

The defence conceded that the police officer was entitled to stop the car and so the issue was whether the justices were correct in their conclusion that the police officer's suspicion was founded on facts wholly unconnected with the defendant's driving.

The prosecution had relied on

the justices' finding that once the defendant was seated in the front passenger seat of the police car, the police officer had noticed a strong smell of intoxicating liquor. That finding was sufficient to provide reasonable cause for suspicion that the defendant had alcohol on his breath.

It had been further submitted, on behalf of the defendant that it was oppressive behaviour by the police officer to act on private information and lie around a corner to wait for an offence to be committed.

In his Lordship's opinion the police officer was under a duty, to act on information received and when an offence was committed to act appropriately. There was no duty to warn a potential offender of a potential offence.

Lord Justice Lloyd delivered a concurring judgment.

Solicitors: DPP, Sharpe Pritchard for Crown, Spalding.

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Spoils of recession head for the north

Edward Fennell reports on thriving provincial practice

Leeds and Manchester have always vied for the position of England's second legal centre. Despite the recession, the West Yorkshire city may be more in the spotlight, if only because the firm of Dobb Lupton Brownhead, estimated to have the biggest insolvency practice in Britain, is based there.

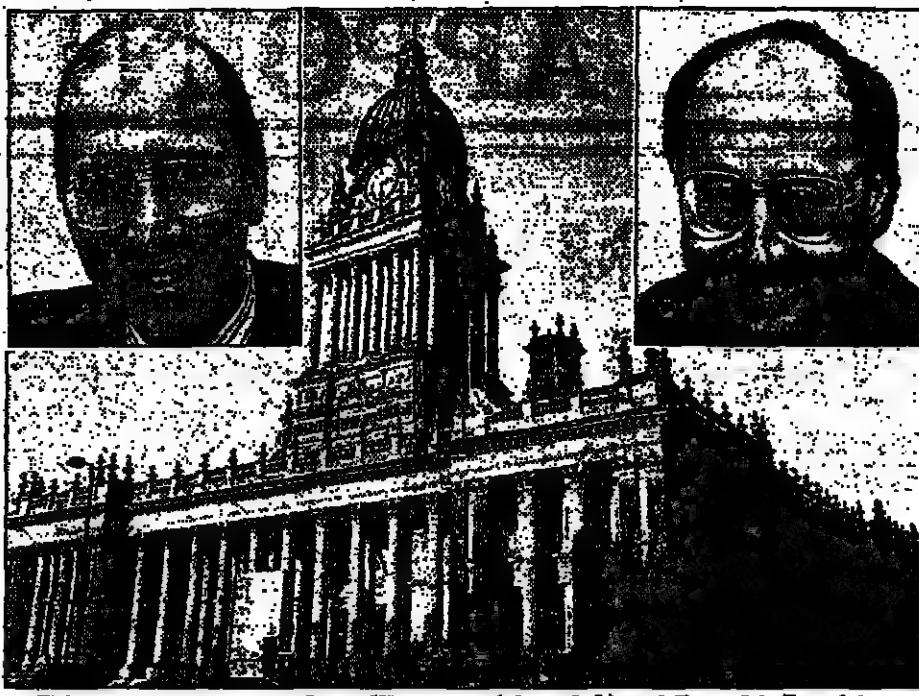
Recession and war, it seems, are treating Leeds lawyers well. At a time when clients are trying to reduce what they pay to lawyers, the Leeds firms are able to make good their claim that they have just as much expertise as London firms at a fraction of the price.

Peter Thompson, of Hepworth & Chadwick, explains: "The Gulf has thrown up a lot of legal problems, particularly for manufacturing companies with interests in the Middle East. For example, there have been contractual issues in Iraq and elsewhere, and employment problems for those who were part of the 'human shield'. It is the kind of work we would prefer not to have, but it needs to be done, and because of our international expertise, we

another, and although their fees are far lower than London's, many have big overheads because they have moved into expensive new office blocks and have invested heavily in computers, training and infrastructure. The quality of their management will now come under scrutiny as they try to maintain their position while fighting one another for clients.

Also striking is the way in which some of the smaller Leeds firms are riding out the storm. The typical high-street partnership is, of course, being hit by the decline in residential property, although this does not seem to have reached the severity suffered in the southeast. However, general practice firms with a foot in the commercial camp are doing reasonably well by sorting out the mess caused by the recession.

Most of the firms with three or four partners to which I spoke last week are running successful debt-collection services, and litigation is also on the increase. For example, Peter McCormick, of the firm McCormick, says his litigation service is 25 per cent busier than last year because



Bright lights of Leeds: Peter Thompson (above left) and Peter McCormick

clients are pursuing money through the courts much more keenly than they would have done two years ago.

This impression was confirmed by Paul Carvis, of Godlove Saffman, who says that his specialist debt collection service is much in demand and that matrimonial work is increasing as marriages buckle under financial stress.

The Spencer Ewin Melville firm admits to doing well through handling repossession because of its substantial investment in information

technology-based legal services. By being computerised and offering a rapid response, the firm has been able to corner a lot of the work from high street lenders. It is the kind of work that may not be attractive, but is an important service in today's economic climate.

Looking to the future, Mr Thompson says he and his colleagues are cautious. The firm is still recruiting lawyers into specific departments and is maintaining its level of training for articled clerks. By being a member of the

Eversheds grouping, the firm has a national profile as well as a local reputation and this helps to attract good-quality candidates.

For smaller firms, the recession has led to an easing of recruitment difficulties. "We are being inundated with applications, whereas a couple of years ago we found it hard to get anybody," says Mr Carvis, at Godlove Saffman. The recruitment improvement applies to staff at all levels, from lawyers through to para-legals and legal secretaries.

INNS AND OUTS

Law funds teachers

THE first joint venture by City law firms to fund their ailing colleagues in higher education has borne fruit. The City Solicitors' Educational Trust, which raised £360,000 for 1991-92 from City firms, says it will distribute grants to 19 universities and polytechnics, mainly to fund lectureships and to buy teaching materials for law libraries.

Richard Youard, the trust's administrator, says the hardest task was turning down an application. "The unmet need is very worrying for the profession and conventional sponsorship by a limited number of individual firms, although invaluable, is not enough."

The trust, a charity set up amid concern about lack of finance for teaching institutions, broke new ground in persuading City firms to act together without the benefit of bestowing their name along with their gift. About 18 firms, representing about half the legal trainees in the City, contributed. With applications to the trust for more than £2 million, however, it is hoped that more will join in.

brush up its image. Mr Devlin says: "The college is facing up to the wind of competition. It is aware that it has a fuddy-duddy image which belies the fact that it is full of young lawyers who have experience of actual practice."

Mr Devlin adds that while the college is the largest provider of Continuing Legal Education courses, the competition is growing. With plans to spread the net to include all lawyers under way, private enterprise as well as universities and polytechnics are moving in on its territory. The college is eager to promote all its existing services and establish itself in the growing market for retraining lawyers wishing to move out of unprofitable specialist areas of practice.

Making up

THE Law Society and the Bar have agreed to make up and be friends over the vexed question of hosting stands at the American Bar Association's annual conference. It all started with the ABA conference in Hawaii in 1988, where the Bar stole a march and hosted the first stand.

The following year, it was hinted that the Law Society

New recruit

THE Public Law Project, set up last September to provide legal services in public and administrative law to those to whom such services are not usually available, has recruited Lee Bridges as policy and research officer to join its development worker, Jane Winter, at the project's office at the Institute of Advanced Legal Studies.

Next month will see the second in a series of seminars from the project, this time on the subject of class actions and equal pay, organised jointly with the Pay Equity Campaign. The seminar will explore the possibilities for pursuing collective remedies in equal pay and equal value cases, and will look at remedies available in other jurisdictions, such as US class action.

Better image

THE College of Law has appointed Tim Devlin Enterprises, a husband-and-wife public relations team, to help



rather pooh-poohed the idea, but after a vote on the Bar Council's international committee, the latter's stand at the ABA in Chicago went ahead. Not to be outdone, the Law Society then booked one as well, to a certain amount of amusement at the Bar.

This year, fired with a new spirit of co-operation, the two branches will host a joint stand at Atlanta - each at opposite ends, with a display of the history of the legal profession between them. As one observer put it, what are a few wigs between friends?

SCRIVENOR

Contracts and the war

Is it a war in the gulf, or a UN enforcement action? The difference in terminology is one that could alter or negate contractual obligations

THE hostilities in the Gulf highlight the importance of what lawyers call *force majeure* clauses. These feature in commercial contracts, particularly those involving shipping and the sale and supply of goods. They can vary or end contracts that have become impossible to perform.

The concept of *force majeure*, literally "irresistible compulsion", is derived from the Napoleonic civil code. It allows somebody to escape liability for obligations under a contract as a result of circumstances (such as the hostilities in the Gulf) not foreseen by the parties when the contract was made and outside their reasonable control.

The effects of *force majeure* depend on the wording of a contract. It may entitle one party to suspend delivery of goods, extend time for shipment or payment, suspend the contract for a limited period, cancel the contract or provide for compensation.

For a contracting party to rely successfully on *force majeure* to excuse him from, for example, failing to ship goods on time, there must be a specific clause in the

contract. The term is not defined in English law and parties seeking relief under *force majeure* as the result of events in the Gulf should check the terms of their contract carefully. A simple "subject to war" clause may not be sufficient.

Force majeure encompasses a number of events, including "acts of God", such as extraordinary weather conditions, earthquakes and floods.

A commercial contract usually provides a list of events covered such as war, strikes, legislative or administrative interference, such as a trade embargo, the refusal of a licence or a seizure of goods; and any other events that are outside the reasonable control of the parties.

However, non-performance will not be excused just because a

contract becomes more expensive to perform.

The Gulf conflict is likely to affect shipping contracts, make import-export licences more difficult to obtain, and stop suppliers in Britain from getting goods they have contracted to supply.

Nevertheless, the courts will expect people to make a reasonable attempt to find a way around the problem before asking to be excused from their obligations under the contract.

Once a *force majeure* event has been established, courts can be more flexible in dealing with these situations and will look to the "commercial code" of the industry concerned for guidance in adjusting the contract to ensure that no party gains an unfair advantage through

its suspension or cancellation.

The courts will be asked whether the action in the Gulf constitutes war in the context of *force majeure*. War occurs in international law only when a country states clearly that it considers itself at war. It does not arise legally when enforcement action is taken as a result of a United Nations security council resolution, as is the case in the Gulf.

The courts have usually taken a practical line. They have enforced clauses referring to war where the contracting parties intended it to apply to situations considered by the public to be war. This is the case whether or not the legal conditions have been met. However, *force majeure* clauses are interpreted strictly, and to be successful a party must establish that the war itself has

prevented him from performing his obligations under the contract.

The doctrine of "frustration" of a contract may also be brought before the courts as a result of the Gulf conflict. This occurs where, without fault of either party, the contract becomes incapable of being performed as a result of supervening circumstances. The 1956 Suez crisis, for example, provoked many claims that shipping contracts had been frustrated as a result of the closure of the canal.

However, the courts said that only contracts that specifically required shipment via the canal had become impossible to perform. Many companies were stuck with the additional expense and time of shipping round the Cape of Good Hope. Unlike *force majeure*, this need not be specified in the contract for a party to rely on it.

The courts are not as flexible when dealing with frustration cases and are unable so easily to readjust a contract to provide a fair result.

KAREN WOOD
The author is an assistant solicitor with the London firm of Charles Russell.

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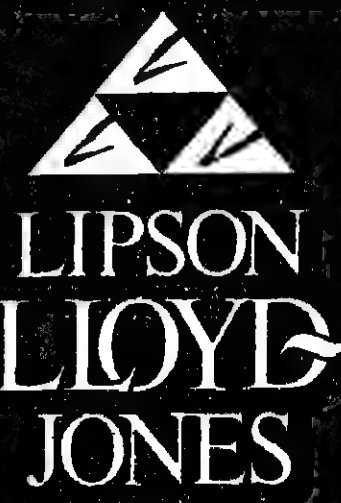
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LINKLATERS & PAINES

Litigation continues to be the preferred area of legal practice for many newly qualified lawyers. Some, though, have understandable concerns about life as a litigator in a large firm and the degree of specialisation which they believe is involved.

To help address these issues we have invited John Turnbull, a partner in the Litigation Department at Linklaters & Paines, to an evening where you can find out first hand about the variety of work in a large firm, the opportunities open to young lawyers and the training involved. After a brief presentation you will be able to talk informally over drinks with him, and a number of his colleagues. Many of them, like yourself, started their careers at other firms both large and small.

If you are a trainee, recently qualified solicitor or barrister and would like to attend, please call Jonathan Macrae on 071-405 6062 (081-672 8340 evenings/weekends) or complete and forward the slip below to him at Quarry Dougall Recruitment, 9 Brownlow Street, London WC1V 6JD.

Name: _____ Date of Qualification/Admission: _____

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For more information about the Company or the work involved, telephone Frances Mizen on (0452) 652851 during normal office hours.

Application forms are available from the Personnel Department at the address below or telephone (0452) 652335 (24 hours) and should be returned before 25.2.91. Please mark envelopes "Nuclear Electric Staff in Confidence" and quote vacancy reference number BWD/17/91.

As an equal opportunities employer Nuclear Electric welcomes applications from men and women including ethnic minorities and the disabled.

Corporate Headquarters

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LEICESTERSHIRE C. £22,000 + CAR
Our client, a high profile company, currently requires a commercial litigator to join its well established legal department. The successful applicant, a solicitor, barrister or legal executive will have a minimum of 2 years' experience.

BUCKS TO £27,000 + CAR
An assistant legal advisor is sought by this multinational company. Applicants are invited from solicitors or barristers with a minimum of 2 years' experience in general company and commercial matters.

The above are only a small selection from the positions we are currently instructed to fill. We are qualified lawyers with extensive experience in legal recruitment and all approaches are treated in strict confidence.

BANKING TO £45,000
Our client is a highly commercial medium sized practice in central London. The firm now requires a high calibre banking solicitor with 2-5 years' experience gained within a leading London firm, to join and help develop a department.

PRIVATE CLIENT C. £35,000
This medium sized City firm is seeking a c. 3 year qualified private client solicitor to assist a partner with probate, trusts and estate planning. Previous exposure to 'heavyweight' private client work is essential.

OXFORD TO £27,500
This well established expanding practice needs an additional litigation solicitor with c. 2 years' experience to undertake a wide range of good quality commercial litigation for corporate clients. There are good prospects.

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NORTH WEST C. £25,000 + CAR
Our client, a subsidiary of a well known organisation, requires an assistant to deal with contractual matters, employment and company secretarial work. Applicants must have a minimum of 3 years' commercial experience.

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A contracts negotiator is required by this major company based in Berkshire. Applicants must have substantial negotiating experience in high value defence contracts and will deal with numerous government bodies.

HIGH TECH. C. £30,000 +
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Please telephone Laurence Simons, Shona McDougall or Patrick Afford on 071-831 3270 (071-481 1890 evenings/weekends) Or write to: Laurence Simons Associates, 33 John's Mews, London WC1N 2NS. Fax: 071-831 4429.

INSOLVENCY £21,000 - 50,000

One of the leading commercial firms in the North of England, our Client is widely acclaimed for its unusually innovative and practical approach to the needs of its very strong and enviable client base. Nowhere is this more so than in the area of insolvency where its practice continues to go from strength to strength.

Due to the firm's continued growth and the ever increasing number of instructions from major accountancy practices, banks and others, it now seeks further top quality insolvency lawyers up to and including partner level:

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For further information in complete confidence, please contact **Gareth Quarry** or **Alistair Dougall** on 071-405 6062 (071-228 5345 evenings/weekends) or write to them at **Quarry Dougall Recruitment**, 9 Brownlow Street, London WC1V 6JD.



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Mrs Sheila Hares,
Personnel Manager,
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happy to share our expertise and experience with you in discussing your particular situation. So, if you are interested in progressing your career, why not talk to the experts? Michael Page Legal, Page House, 39-41 Parker Street, London WC2B 5LH. Telephone: 071-831 2000, Fax: 071-831 2223.



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MERGERS/BOLT-ONS

The current recruitment climate has in no way lessened the number and variety of instructions we are receiving from practices in London and throughout the country who wish to merge or acquire bolt ons.

These range from firms wishing to increase their size and effectiveness to those wishing to attract bolt ons in niche areas to complement their own areas of practice. All enquiries will be treated by us at director level and in the strictest confidence.

CO/COMMERCIAL

A young solicitor with a corporate finance background and experience of Yellow Book work is needed by this well regarded medium-sized City practice. Continuing growth is the keynote and the prime requirement is a willingness to be involved in this planned expansion. The quality of work and prospects will reflect this.

Out of London

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Our client is an established Sussex practice near Gatwick with a requirement for a solicitor ideally with at least 3 yrs exp in residential and light commercial conveyancing. The appointee will be required to supervise a small department and have the outgoing, go-getting personality needed to maintain and create business.

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You will be based in Saudi Arabia and a considerable amount of your time will be spent in worldwide travel.

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Ref: 1036.

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Excellent prospects are offered by one of the UK's leading practices which urgently requires a 3-4 year qualified solicitor for its pensions and employee benefits department. Good experience in this area is essential to advise companies and individuals on various aspects of pensions law, including scheme formations and reconstructions, trust deeds. Experience of share option schemes and employee benefits would be helpful.

Ref: 1033

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£30,000++

Major City practice requires an assistant solicitor with 1-3 years' post-admission experience to join its expanding litigation department to specialise in claims against professional practices. The high profile caseload will be varied and interesting, and the position offers good prospects for the hard-working and enthusiastic individual.

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Box No. Dept., P.O. Box 484 Virginia Street,
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Industry's gentlest touch

One of the few remaining male-dominated professions is changing, slowly but with push and publicity from the Engineering Industry Training Board. Two hundred women have passed through the Technician Engineering Scholarship Scheme (TESS) since it was started in 1985.

TESS is meant to encourage women to enter an industry with a shortage in electronics and software engineers and a traditionally macho image. Making engineering attractive to young women was hard work until last year when national advertising brought a record 1,500 enquiries.

"The industry is a stepped process," says Julie Brophy, a board training officer in Walsall, West Midlands, who is responsible for women's initiatives. "The top echelons are the chartered engineers, graduates whose area is conception and design. Then there are the crafts people and engineer technicians, who put it together. TESS trains technician engineers to fit in between."

The in-between area involves understanding the why and the how of electronic equipment, possibly a washing machine or nightlights for the army. The technician engineer develops designs, tests prototypes and makes modifications. This means everything between the commission and the installation. "We try to show the school student or the young woman with an interest in science that there is a place in engineering and it does not have to be an

Women are at long last making headway in engineering. The range of opportunities on offer are examined by Bernardine Coverley

apprenticeship at 16 or a degree course," Miss Brophy says.

Although many students whom TESS interests do not have standard entry qualifications for a technology course, some science and related subjects among GCSE passes, including technical drawing, can make them eligible.

Students must be over 18, and although the two-year course leads to the BTEC/SCOTVEC Higher National Certificate in electronic engineering, many TESS graduates continue their training at degree level. Miss Brophy is a good role model. She has experience as a working engineer and has passed through a sponsorship scheme run by her employers, though in pre-TESS days. She recalls: "In the first year, based in college, there were 11 of us with 70 guys. In the second year we were all sent to different companies on placement. Once they realised I was serious about the work, being a woman in a man's world was no problem."

She believes new trainees should meet a woman who can say, "I am an engineer", particularly as few women have yet completed their study and become trainers. The board, soon to become the Engineering Training Authority, is still trying to persuade women to join the industry. However, the

shortage of skilled workers in engineering and the expected demographic changes make the recruitment of women essential.

Work in industry lived up to Miss Brophy's expectations as it offered the variety and the challenge of changing technology. Later, working for a data communications company, she was given a management job with responsibility for the European repair centre. This was her introduction to training.

TESS has grown since the pilot course at Lincoln college of technology and is now run in five colleges.

Students spend the first year on welding, grinding and lathe work, which are the building blocks of technical engineering. The second year concentrates on software and electronics and includes a nine-week placement. "We help students to focus on an area that suits their interests but does not close off choice," Miss Brophy says.

Ninety-five per cent complete the course, and 80 per cent go into industry. The remainder train to a higher level. "We can ease the way in, but then women have to compete on an equal basis because otherwise it is not doing the cause

of women engineers any good," Miss Brophy says.

Toni Hickman, from Reading, Berkshire, is 20 years old and in her second year at Crawley college of technology in West Sussex. "I was always interested in mechanical things and I enjoyed maths and science at school, so engineering was a logical step for me," she says.

This certainty made her an exception to the mainstream separation of sexes at A-level. She was the only girl in her school to take A-level technology. Even with her background, Miss Hickman found the selection interview tough. "They wanted to make sure we had a genuine interest and set tests," she says.

Other students in her year have a variety of qualifications and by no means all have A-levels.

The course, consisting of two intensive years, has not been an easy choice. A female counsellor is available once a week so that students can discuss the progress of studies and tackle problems. The advertisements say you can "earn as you learn", and although the £90 a week is adequate, some students find they have to supplement this with part-time work, especially if they want to visit home at the weekends.

The placement has been a particularly satisfying experience. The college arranges to place students in companies that, as far as possible, will provide practical work to match their interests.

One student worked on technology used in treating cancer and another interested in sound en-



Techno woman: "I liked mechanical things, so engineering was a logical step," Toni Hickman says

gineering went into a recording studio. Miss Hickman was placed with a company making bridges for computer networks and was encouraged to learn about the different stages of the work. Her employment was a first experience for the company too, and she was impressed by the trouble taken to ensure that she benefited from her time there. "They wanted me to tell them how they could be most help and they put a lot of trust in me," she says.

The next big step is final examinations in July. Then Miss Hickman aims for a wider experience before setting down into her chosen field of computer software. She says: "I have made a lot of contacts through the course and there is a shortage of qualified technician engineers in the United States and Australia. A year in the US appeals to me, and I am thinking of higher education too." The Fawcett Society, founded in 1866 to campaign for sex equality,

has recognised the positive action of TESS with an award. Next, Miss Brophy hopes to see the TESS successes win more practical support from employers.

Finally, when the technician engineer has five years' experience, including training, she can register with the Engineers Registration Board and display "Eng" after her name.

Engineering Industry Training Board, Centre House, Rookery Lane, Aldridge, West Midlands WS9 8QR.

071-481 1066

PUBLIC APPOINTMENTS

071-481 1066

Commercial & Marketing Director

c. £24,997-£38,160

Horticulture Research International (HRI) has created a new post of Commercial & Marketing Director. The postholder will be responsible to the Chief Executive for the organisation's overall commercial and business development activities, including strategy formulation, implementation and the generation of contract income.

HRI is the principal UK contractor for research and development in Horticulture. It was formed recently by the amalgamation of four former AFRC Research Stations at East Malling, Littlehampton, Wellesbourne and Wye, and three former Experimental Horticulture Stations, Efford, Kirtou and Stockbridge House. HRI undertakes research for several Government departments as well as for industry, grower-funded bodies and international agencies.

The objective of this key post is to more than double HRI's contract income by 1994. The post calls for senior business experience preferably within a technology-based industry and experience of contract negotiations in either the public or private sector. A working knowledge of a European language, in addition to English, would be an advantage.

The post is located at HRI Wellesbourne, Warwickshire, and is for a period of 5 years in the first instance.

Employment conditions are excellent, with a non-contributory pension scheme. Assistance with relocation will be given, where appropriate.

To apply, please contact the Chief Executive (0789 470382), Horticulture Research International, Wellesbourne, Warwickshire CV35 9EP for further details. Please quote reference 200P.

Closing date for receipt of applications is 28th February 1991.

HRI is an Equal Opportunities Employer.

HORTICULTURE RESEARCH INTERNATIONAL

Director-General

For the LEONARD CHESHIRE FOUNDATION, a leading international charity acknowledged as a pioneer in the provision of care for physically and mentally handicapped people. The Foundation is now modifying its U.K. structure to suit the needs of the 88 Homes and the 30 Family Support Services and to ensure that it can conform with the requirements of current legislation in community care.

As Chief Executive, responsible to the Chairman and Trustees of the Foundation, the Director-General will contribute to corporate policy, be responsible for its implementation and provide leadership to the Foundation's professional staff. A prime task will be the development of the new operating structure. The Foundation has a fine record in its caring role and the management of change will require finesse and persuasive skill.

Achievement at general management level in a widely deployed enterprise is a prime requirement. A temperament suited to the purpose and style of the Foundation is equally important. Previous experience in the voluntary sector could be an advantage, but applications are invited from men and women of attainment in other sectors.

Salary for discussion in the region of £40,000.

Location: Central London.

Please write in confidence with full CV to Geoffrey Elms, Charity Appointments, 3 Spital Yard, London E1 6AQ.

Charity Appointments

A registered charity serving the voluntary sector.

NEWNHAM COLLEGE CAMBRIDGE DEVELOPMENT TRUST

Appeal Director

Newnham College, a pioneer of women's higher education and a successful College of the University, set up in 1987 a Development Trust to raise, from individuals, companies and foundations, the substantial funds needed to support the College's long-term academic development and the restoration of its listed buildings.

The Trustees seek to appoint in April/May 1991 or as soon as possible thereafter a vigorous and practical Appeal Director, who enjoys working at a variety of levels and meeting a wide range of people, to obtain and increase the momentum generated by the first holder of the post and the small office team. First class organising ability essential.

Salary not less than £20,000. Cambridge-based.

Further particulars may be obtained from the Secretary to the Newnham College Development Trust, Newnham College, Cambridge, CB9 9DF. Applications including CV and the names of two recent and relevant referees should be sent to the Secretary by 6 March 1991.

THE BUTTLE TRUST A Christian Foundation for Children and Young People

CASE WORKER

The Buttle Trust seeks to appoint a Case Worker to join a team of 4 in responding to applications from social work agencies and individuals on behalf of children and young people with special needs. Salary in accordance with age, experience and qualifications. Applicants should be over 30, have a professional qualification, experience in social work (general or medical), probation or education welfare — and be able to drive.

Applications in writing with CV and 2 referees to: The Director, Audley House, 13 Palace Street, London SW1E 6HS.

LEGAL

Middlesbrough Borough Council

BOROUGH SECRETARY'S DEPARTMENT

Applications are invited for the following senior post within the Borough Secretary's Department.

PRINCIPAL SOLICITOR (PROPERTY) 217271-219911 with additional performance related increments up to £21936

We are looking for a Solicitor with a broad background in conveyancing and property matters preferably with previous experience in Local Government.

The postholder will be responsible to the Assistant Borough Secretary (Property) for the supervision of the Property Division and will be involved in all aspects of the corporate management of the Department.

He or she will be expected to deal with specialised and complex conveyancing and property transactions with nominal supervision and will represent the Borough Secretary at Committees, working parties and project team meetings. If you would like to have an informal discussion about the post contact David Deagle on extension 3507.

We would particularly welcome applications and enquiries from black and Asian people, people with disabilities and women, because of their under representation (Section 25(1)(a) Race Relations Act; Section 48 Sex Discrimination Act).

Application forms and job descriptions are available from and should be returned to the Borough Secretary, Middlesbrough Borough Council, P.O. Box 99A, Municipal Buildings, Middlesbrough, Cleveland, TS1 2QQ. Telephone 245432 Extension 3507.

Closing date 1 March 1991

An attractive relocation package is available including 100% removal expenses, agent and legal fees.

Middlesbrough is the commercial centre for Cleveland. The Town Centre has already been substantially redeveloped and the Council is engaged on a number of exciting projects. The attractive countryside of the North Yorkshire Moors is close at hand together with unspoilt coastline and beaches. There are ample opportunities for outdoor recreation.

Middlesbrough Borough Council actively pursues equality of opportunity so that all are treated fairly.

People with disabilities who have the written support of a Disabled Person's Officer will be given an interview; job share available.

Day Nursery places are available.

IRELAND FISH PATHOLOGIST IN THE DEPARTMENT OF THE MARINE

The successful applicant will work in the Fish Pathology Unit of the Department's Fisheries Research Centre. The main function of the unit is to provide the Department of the Marine with the technical advice and support to fulfil its role in maintaining the good health status of wild and reared fish within the State.

- Essential: Registration in, or eligibility for registration in, the Register of Veterinary Surgeons for Ireland; postgraduate experience in Fish Pathology.
- Salary: IR£19,519 to IR£25,825 (entry up to the maximum possible, depending on experience)
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KING'S COLLEGE LONDON University of London COMPUTING CENTRE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

Control and Distributed Systems and Communications

The holder of this new post will head a team of staff with responsibility for supporting and advising on the development of the complete range of the College's academic and administrative computing and communications systems and associated peripherals. The Computing Centre also acts as a Co-ordinating Centre for three other institutions in London University, and the Assistant Director will play a part in similar areas.

The successful candidate will have demonstrated that he or she has the personal qualities and experience necessary to manage a team of staff and to advance and develop policy with the senior management of the Computing Centre and the College. He or she will have a degree or equivalent as well as substantial experience of supporting and advising on computer systems and data communications at a senior level. The College at present operates Digital VAX computers, X25 and Ethernet communication networks and has substantial populations of IBM (and clones) and Macintosh microcomputers.

It is expected that the appointment will be made at an appropriate point in the range £24,422-£28,238 per annum inclusive, according to age, qualifications and experience. But a higher salary might be available for an exceptional candidate.

Further particulars and application form may be obtained from the Personnel Department, King's College London, Strand, London, WC2R 2LS. Tel: 071-873 2053.

Closing date for receipt of applications is 28th March 1991.

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Salary is £22k depending on qualifications and experience. The school is to be incorporated on April 1st 1991, but the Governors are empowered to appoint before that date in order to prepare the school for its new status and responsibilities. However, appointment could be deferred to a later date if the successful candidate has a longer period of notice to serve from current post.

Further information from the Clerk to the Governors, 190 Monks Road, London E7 9PR answerphone 081 470 1450, fax 081 471 4084 to whom complete applications (letter, CV, and two referees) should be returned by Friday February 22nd.

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THE TIMES

THE SUNDAY TIMES

DIRECTIONS

CAREERS & HIGHER EDUCATION FAIR

Doc's Coat poised to go one better

By MANDARIN

LARKHILL, situated in the wilderness of Salisbury Plain, is better known as a centre for army manoeuvres than as an exercise ground for racehorses.

However, Chris Wildman has trained there with some success since taking over from his father, Bill, 11 years ago and Doc's Coat is mapped to give South View Stables another victory in the Japanese Handicap Hurdle at Lingfield today.

Wildman, a former amateur rider, may have been initially disappointed not to have collected with Doc's Coat at Windsor last time out when the well-supported favourite finished runner-up to Dramatic Event.

However, the strength of that two-mile contest was emphasised when Dramatic Event went on to land a competitive handicap hurdle at Stratford three days later.

Prior to that encounter with Dramatic Event, Doc's Coat had finished a highly creditable fifth to Light Dancer at Kempton, beaten 17 lengths. Kevin Mooney, who partnered Doc's Coat on that



Mooney: rides the fancied Doc's Coat at Lingfield

ices' Handicap Hurdle should be rewarded.

When the Rainbow Quest colt encountered an all-weather surface for the first time at Southwell three weeks ago, he sprang a surprise victory. Before that success he had performed with credit on the turf in well-contested novice hurdles.

Today, he faces a stiff task against St. Villo and Kilroy, who will be renewing rivalry. I expect Kilroy to reverse recent form with St. Villo as he is 7lb better off for the five-length defeat he suffered when they last met on this track in January.

If Kilroy recaptures the form which enabled him to win a competitive novice hurdle at Market Rasen in September, he would only have to remain on his feet to win the Buddies Selling Hurdle.

However, since that neck victory over Swagman, the Frankie Dunn-trained gelding has been bitterly disappointing. The mediocrity of today's contest, though, should enable my selection to regain winning ways.

The forecast of Martin Pipe to install snow-clearing

equipment on his Somerset gallops can be rewarded on the Surrey track where I expect him to make a double with Viking Flagship (1.55) and Tri Folene (2.55).

Viking Flagship made all the running when beating Osbow by 12 lengths at Sandown last time and should have little more than an exercise gallop in the Forsythia Juvenile Novices' Hurdle. Saugale, a three-length course and distance winner over On The Sence 12 days ago, looks the danger.

Tri Folene has disappointed twice since beating Tranquil Waters at Haydock in December.

Her recent running at Cheltenham, where she was

never going and was pulled up before the ninth hurdle in a three-mile handicap won by Cope and Robbers, has to be overlooked. But her shrewd trainer would not be running Tri Folene if she was not back to her best and it looks well worth taking a chance with her in the Clematis Handicap Hurdle.

Lady Ellie, who caught the eye when staying on in fourth place behind Blakesware Prince over today's course and distance, can open her account in the Wistaria National Hunt Flat Race.

The Gardie Grissell-trained filly renews rivalry with Lark Lad, runner-up that day, but I feel she has the greater scope for improvement.

Thursday's meetings at Sandown, Taunton and Leicestershire are all extremely doubtful. The two-day Thurfle meeting tomorrow and Wednesday will be covered live by SIS. Tomorrow's card includes the valuable PZ Mower Chase.

Green light for changes to drug-testing rules

By RICHARD EVANS

CHANGES to drug-testing rules will come into effect next week, despite vocal opposition from two leading racing lawyers.

The Jockey Club stewards yesterday officially noted an amendment to existing instructions which allows confirmatory tests of positive samples.

Trainers and owners will have ten days to give written notification that a confirmatory analysis is required, and a further 21 days for the work to be carried out. There is currently no time limit for confirmatory tests.

The changes, aimed at avoiding a repeat of the 17-month Alynasco case, were criticised over the weekend by Matthew

Business almost as usual for Pipe and Scudamore

RACING returned after a break of five days at Southwell yesterday with Martin Pipe and Peter Scudamore the dominant forces on an eventful afternoon.

Pipe saddled five runners and won with the last four after being interviewed by the stewards to explain the failure of odds-on Sweet N' Twenty in the opening race.

Scudamore, beaten 15 lengths into fifth place on Sweet N' Twenty, landed a double on Vignone and Tom Clapton but injured himself in the process and had to give up a later winning ride on Tim Soldier.

On dismounting from Vignone, his first all-weather winner, Scudamore said: "I hurt my leg when he kicked at the first. It's just one of those silly things and the more I use it the better it gets."

However, after winning on Tom Clapton, Scudamore called it a day and Graham McCourt took over on Tim Soldier. "Peter is just a bit stiff," Pipe said later. "He jarred his leg a bit and then Tom Clapton took a real blow going down to post in the next."

The champion jockey was due to see a specialist next night but was still hoping to be in action today at Lingfield.

Scudamore, who missed 11 weeks after breaking his left leg in November, has ridden 13 winners since he came back at Newmarket on January 24 and now trails Richard Dunwoody 31-67.

Pipe's fourth winner, Blake's Progress, landed a wholesale gamble in the Radley Amateur Riders' Handicap Hurdle. Having opened at 9-2 in the offices in the morning, the Blakesey

gelding was again heavily supported on-course and was sent off 4-6 favourite, despite having disappointed in his three previous starts.

Earlier, Pipe's explanation for the defeat of Sweet N' Twenty in the Scudamore Novices' Hurdle, was accepted by the stewards. Pipe told the officials that Sweet N' Twenty, running on an all-weather surface for the first time and carrying top weight, was just not good enough. They ordered a routine dope test on the mare.

Pipe said: "I don't know what happened. The horse seems all right. I brought five horses here today that I thought would act on the surface, but you never know."

The champion trainer's

Nottingham run likely for former champion

BEECH Road, joint favourite for the Champion Hurdle, could attempt to repair his tarnished reputation in the valuable City Trial Hurdle at Nottingham on Saturday.

Changes of racing going ahead at the Midlands course were yesterday described as 50-50. There are only two inches of snow on the track and clear skies yesterday brought a slight thaw.

Beech Road, who won the £10,000 Nottingham Hurdle last year, a limited handicap hurdle. Having refused to take part on his last appearance at Windsor, the former champion is in desperate need of a race, according to his stable, Beddington.

Ford had been badly hit by the weather and a festival pipe-opener is now regarded as essential.

Jonathan Geake, Beddington's

assistant trainer, said yesterday: "We want to give him a run as soon as we can. The gallops have been frozen solid and, although we've been doing plenty on the roads, the horses are short of work."

At Nottingham, Beech Road could come up against Jenny Pittman's exciting prospect, Danny Harrold, and Martin Pipe's honest, hard, ante-post favourite, the 11-2 favourite, Tote Gold Trophy. Pipe has also entered Cypharis, Lamhill and Soudra.

At Newcastle racocourse is considering an appeal to the Secretary of State over a local council decision to turn down a £10 million housing development. The course was hoping to overcome financial trouble by turning 27 acres of land into houses, flats and offices.

Results from Southwell

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By DAVID HANDS, RUGBY CORRESPONDENT

The meeting, which will take place in London, is of the Commonwealth Committee of Foreign Ministers on South Africa and Bob Hawke, the Australian prime minister, has already indicated his hope that, sooner, rather than later, South Africa will return to the international scene, subject to sports governing bodies occupying a multi-racial stance.

The ARU has been unequivocal in its support for South Africa in recent years. New Zealand has been more circumspect, which is not surprising given the division within the community when the unofficial New Zealand Cavaliers went to South Africa.

However, the two countries are now at one over the concept of fielding an ANZAC XV as the conclusion to British Isles tours: this is their equivalent to the Barbarians match which concludes major tours to Britain.

Before then, the New Zealand union celebrates its centenary and is to invite Ian McGeechan, the Scottish coach, to prepare a world XV next April.

THE LAST thing that Olympique coach Roger Lestienne and were for their supporters to be involved in, any kind of trouble. But with their image already in tatters earlier in the week after a Uefa ban from European competitions, that was precisely what happened to the Swiss club in the knockout stage in Paris.

Hooligans clashed with 300 riot police after attacking the referee, Michalis Naoum, whose crime was to allow the late equaliser from Athleticos, fourth in the table, against their second-placed hosts, which was the last of the season.

The match, which was invaded and then abandoned as supporters burned seats and wrecked cars.

Trouble, which also seems to have been a constant companion to Diego Maradona lately, was also the cause of a riot by the Argentines, calling a truce with Napoli. Maradona, who found himself at the macabre site of Napoli's training ground on three days last week, scored two goals from penalties and set up two more in the 4-2 triumph. "I don't know what those things have returned to normal here," he said.

The Spaniards' Edwards, Galtchak, Vialli and Roberto Mancini, both dropped from the national squad which receives Belgium tomorrow, also excelled in the 3-0 win over Bologna, which kept the Genoa side disputing the top positions.

In France, the champions, Marseilles maintained their five-point lead with a 1-0 victory at Paris Saint-Germain. They were inspired by Chris Waddle, whose half-cleared corner, sent Rube Boll to thunder in the only goal after 71 minutes. Further celebrations came Marseilles' way with yesterday's news that six of their players are in the French squad to meet Spain at the same Parc des Princes next Wednesday.

In Spain, two late flashes of Schuster's ingenuity kept Real Madrid, who were winners over Valladolid, within four points of Barcelona. Schuster scored one goal from a free kick and set up another for Alfredo Sautelana by threading a perfect pass through a defender's legs. Barcelona, meanwhile, beat Valencia 4-3 in the last game of Belzoni's 99th and 100th league goals.

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By NICHOLAS HARLING

By SRIKUMAR SEN

BOYING CORRESPONDENT

LLOYD Honeyghan continues his rounds of the small halls to re-establish himself as a force in the world. Tonight, he is at the Balmuccia, where he will meet John Walters, of Colorado.

The former world welter-weight champion, who now boxes as a light-midweight, will have a long rest of a month at the Lanchester Sports Centre after a ten-month absence from the ring which followed his crushing defeat by Max Baer.

Honeyghan stopped Max Olmedo, of Mexico, in four rounds on a cut eye. Although Honeyghan is a professional, he is much of his boxing was better, even sharper, than the slam-bang-wallop stuff of old.

Everything seems to point to a comfortable victory for Honeyghan against his amateur, John Walters, aged 29, is better known as John Who? Walters has a record of 24 wins in 27 bouts but his opponents have not been of the highest quality. Walters was given two tough fights, over six rounds and seven rounds, by one Wayne Alvin Grant (a.k.a. Wayne Evins), whose record at the time was 10 wins in 11 fights. However, Honeyghan holds no fears for Walters. "I'll catch him with my right he'll go," Walters said yesterday.

Honeyghan says his hands are not growing him any more, so he should be back in his dressing room early.

Snow job: Embiid (left) and Taylor mean business when they travel to Orlando for the World League of American Football draft camp.

the Jets and, despite not playing a competitive game for almost 18 months, probably needs only to show his form to be successful.

And Hoyte are both big, agile men. Carthy has versatility on his side and Alexander holds the British fielding record.

But Taylor's determination that he took him through the WLAFA trials show that a tough competitor he is.

It is to realise that the WLAFA, and the London Monarchs especially, would get more publicity if they were to be picked for the Monarchs, perhaps to play against the Jets, than to the British American football scene, which seems to be in constant turmoil. It may not end with the WLAFA for, on many occasions, the Jets have been "a stepping stone to the NFL" has been uttered.

For D. and B. ...

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By DAVID BOHANNAN

The Dairy Crest meeting will feature the world's fastest woman as well as the world's fastest man, which Burrell is. Merlene Ottey finished ahead of the European 100 and 200 metres champion, Katrina Krabbe, in the rankings last year and her appearance at Cosford was announced yesterday. Ottey, a Jamaican living in Italy, surpassed even Florence Griffith-Joyner in Zurich last August when she recorded the world's fastest one-day double of 10.93sec for the 100 metres and 21.66 for the 200.

6-15-82

By SRIKUMAR SEN

BOYING CORRESPONDENT

LLOYD Honeyghan continues his rounds of the small halls to re-establish himself as a force in the world. Tonight, he is at the Balmington Club, facing the former John Walters, of Colorado.

The former world welter-weight champion, who now boxes as a light-midweight, will have a busy month at the Lanchester Sports Centre after a ten-month absence from the ring which followed his crushing defeat by Max Baer.

Honeyghan stopped Max Baer, of Mexico, in four rounds on a cut eye. Although Honeyghan is a professional, his boxing was much of his boxing was better, even sharper, than the slam-bang-wallop stuff of old.

Everything seems to point to a comfortable victory for Honeyghan against his amateur, John Walters, aged 29, is better known as John Who? Walters has a record of 24 wins in 27 bouts but his opponents have not been of the highest quality. Walters was given two tough fights, over six rounds and seven rounds, by one Wayne Alvin Grant (a.k.a. Wayne Evins), whose record at the time was 10 wins in 11 fights. However, Honeyghan holds no fears for Walters. "I'll catch him with my right belt," Walters said yesterday.

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ICE HOCKEY

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GOLF

LAURELHILL, Florida (Continued)
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GUARDIAN, Breed: Chevrolet Classics East-West; P Baur (Ger) vs S Matsuoaka (Japan), 5-7, 6-3, 7-6. Fleet: Baur in Ross, 6-2, 6-3.

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SPORT

RFU bans advert featuring four England players

By DAVID HANDS, RUGBY CORRESPONDENT

AN ADVERTISEMENT featuring four England players has been banned by the Rugby Football Union (RFU) from the programme for England's match with Scotland this weekend. Although similar advertisements (but for different products) have already appeared in the Wales-England and Scotland-Wales programmes this season, the RFU says that until the amateur regulations have been clarified, no such material will appear at matches under their aegis.

The advertisement was placed by an agency whose customers, Timberland, sell outdoor leisure clothes and equipment. The same firm advertised in the programme for the University match played at Twickenham last December, though without using players as models, and their product is not rugby-related. This is the sticking point within the amateur regulations which is causing so much confusion.

Last month, three Welsh internationals appeared in the Wales-England programme advertising Umbro playing kit. Umbro is the official supplier to the Welsh Rugby Union (WRU) and the use of players in this respect, the WRU said, is part of the overall deal for which the players are not paid. Earlier this month, Scottish internationals featured in the Scotland-Wales programme wearing a particular brand of dress shirt, an advertisement which must have received the approval of the Scottish Rugby Union.

All advertisements run by Programme Publications, who produce match programmes

for the English, Welsh and Scottish unions, are sent automatically to the home union concerned for approval. In this latest instance, the advertisement, which was placed only last Friday and which I understand includes three English forwards and one back, has been withdrawn.

"The whole point of the new amateur rules is that what the players do should not be rugby-related," Dudley Wood, the RFU secretary, said. "If you have them appearing in an international-match programme, that is clearly rugby-related. We decide what advertisements go in our programme and we will decide this time. The players' code of conduct [which was recently updated] clearly excludes anything with a rugby connotation."

There is a point, however, when sauce for the goose must become sauce for the gander. The RFU has permitted this season, for instance, advertisements featuring action pictures of identifiable rugby players; but though this latest advertisement, legitimately placed, appears to comply with the International Rugby Football Board (IRFB) ruling, however imprecise that ruling may be, the union has extended the rule from the product to the place where the product shall appear.

On Sunday, representatives of the English, Scottish and Irish unions sat down to address the differences arising from the relaxed amateur regulations, which will be the subject of a special debate when the IRFB holds its annual meeting next month.

At much the same time, but on the other side of the world,

Jacques dismissed as Davis Cup captain

By ANDREW LONGMORE, TENNIS CORRESPONDENT

WARREN Jacques, the British Davis Cup captain and international men's team director for the last three years, is to leave the Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) at the end of the month. His duties will be taken over in the short term, and quite possibly in the long term as well, by Richard Lewis, who took charge of junior development last year.

A terse statement from the LTA yesterday said: "The LTA's contract with Warren Jacques... will be terminated with effect from the end of this month."

"Warren still had 18 months left," Ian Peacock, executive director of the LTA, said. "But we wanted to

restructure the department and it seemed sensible to do it sooner rather than later. The problem was that Warren had to travel so much he was not able to give enough of himself to the players."

"He has been a very healthy and positive influence on the association and we hope very much he will continue to be involved with British tennis."

The departure, which comes just five months after Jacques had been offered a two-year extension to his initial three-year contract, is sudden, though not entirely unexpected.

Jacques, aged 52, had become increasingly frustrated by the limited terms of his duties as international team director, which meant he was unable to help with the development of the juniors, by



Jacques: frustrated

the lack of progress in getting the necessary facilities for his players and by a lack of commitment among coaches and the senior players.

After Britain's 5-0 defeat by France in the play-off match for the world group at Queen's

last September, Jacques had suggested it would be at least five years before there was any light at the end of the tunnel.

Jacques was appointed in August 1987 after he had taken Kevin Curren to the Wimbledon final. With limited resources he led Britain three times to the brink of a return to the world group of the Davis Cup, but each time — against Austria, Argentina and France — they were well beaten. Ironically, Jacques's dismissal comes shortly after he had negotiated LTA support for a new tennis centre, which could be used by the senior British players, in Wimbledon.

The LTA will now consider the options open to it, either of hiring a new international team manager, whose job will

be to work solely with the players, or to put Lewis in overall charge of junior and senior development and appoint a separate Davis Cup captain, possibly Mark Cox. "We have a chance now of looking at the structure and seeing if we can improve it," Peacock said.

● Boris Becker, who took over the world No. 1 position in winning the Australian Open, and Stefan Edberg, the man he succeeded, renew their rivalry in ATP tournaments in Brussels and Stuttgart during the next fortnight with the odds firmly in the Swede's favour.

Because he won both events last year, failure could cost Becker more than 500 points, while Edberg, who was injured this time last year, has none to lose.

Possession of steroids not a criminal offence in new law

By JOHN GOODBODY

THE government has decided not to make the possession of anabolic steroids a criminal offence, breaking a promise made publicly two-and-a-half years ago and reiterated frequently in private.

Instead, Kenneth Baker, the home secretary, has decided to make a new criminal offence of anyone supplying a minor (that is, somebody aged under 18), even when no payment is involved.

The department of health will also set up a survey of the use and misuse of hormone drugs, which have been responsible for deaths in both this country and abroad, and will also put more money into research on detection and testing methods.

The government wants to see an extension of the Sport Council's advertising campaign warning young people in particular of the dangers of taking anabolic steroids to improve their physiques and sporting performances, and has ordered more action against advertising such drugs.

The decision, taken by a group of ministers and officials at an inter-departmental meeting last week, is a rebuff for Robert Atkins, the minister for sport.

It was Atkins's predecessor, Colin Moynihan, who worked assiduously to make the possession of hormone drugs a criminal offence, possibly by adding them to the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971. At present, it is only an offence to sell the prescription-only drugs which bring them under the Medicines Act of 1968.

Atkins, who is campaigning strongly for "fair play in sport" said in November that he would be "even more supportive" than Moynihan in a move to legislate for hormone drugs. "I am pressing as strongly as I can to get a decision," he said. "It has got to happen." It has not, and yesterday Atkins said: "We were advised by the enforcement agencies that this was not the way to proceed in view of the practical difficulties in the enforcement of successful prosecution."

Although Atkins welcomed the other measures announced by the government, Menzies Campbell, who is seeking to introduce his own private members bill demanding legislation in Parliament today, said: "This is most disappointing news when you consider that in 1988 a Home Office minister announced in public the government's intention of making anabolic steroids a controlled drug."

"Since then hardly a week has gone by without an indication of the extent of the abuse of drugs in sport. There is a huge network of drug-taking going on under the surface."

Sir Arthur Gold, the chairman of the British Olympic Association, said he was "gravely disappointed, because I believe the Home Office is refusing to grasp the nettle and is evading its responsibility."

He said that the prime factor in reducing the abuse of drugs was to restrict its supply and this the Home Office decision had not done.

Klimova dope test proves positive

By JOHN HENNESSY

MARINA Klimova, who with Sergei Ponomarenko won her third European championship ice dance title at Sofia last month, failed a dope test on the last day of the competition, it was revealed yesterday.

The only previous disqualification in figure skating and ice dance involved a French girl in the world junior championships a decade ago. Klimova, aged 24, and her husband Ponomarenko, 30, won the last two world championships. Klimova's positive test was regarded as so dramatic in Sofia that officers of the International Skating Union (ISU) were advised to "sit down and order a cognac" before the news was given to them in private session.

A second sample from the same urine specimen has to be tested in the presence of the two Soviet skaters and representatives of their national federation to confirm the original finding. If that proves positive, the ISU council will discuss the tests at its next

meeting at Iszell on February 21.

Under its rules, the council would have no alternative but to apply a suspension which would cover not only the world championships in Munich next month but also the winter Olympics at Albertville next year.

The European gold medals would fall to the French champions, Isabelle and Paul Duchesnay. The silver would go to the second Soviet couple, Maia Usova and Alexander Zhulin, and the bronze to Klara Engi and Atilla Toth, of Hungary.

Klimova and her husband confounded the sceptics at Sofia. The Duchesnays had beaten them for the first time in the free dance of the world championships at Halifax, Nova Scotia, last season and, only two days earlier, they had beaten the Soviet couple, again for the first time, in the original dance in Sofia. But on the final day of the Europeans, Klimova and Ponomarenko gave a bravura performance.

Selectors demonstrate how highly Halliday is valued

By DAVID HANDS

ENGLAND'S team to play Scotland, the five nations champions, for the Calcutta Cup at Twickenham on Saturday contains no surprises but the replacements do. Simon Halliday, whose playing career seemed in jeopardy for medical reasons last summer, is restored to the squad after a handful of matches in the colours of Harlequins, the club he joined in December.

Halliday, aged 30, made his sixteenth international appearance in the grand slam match against Scotland at Murrayfield last March. He was already suffering discomfort from an ankle originally damaged in 1983. When he underwent an operation in July, Halliday did not know whether he would be able to resume playing.

Since then he has trained hard and also changed jobs, moving from Bath to work in

London. Hence, his return to Harlequins, his club when he was a student at Oxford University.

"When you have been working on your fitness for ten years or more it's impossible just to let your physical side drift," Halliday said. "But if at any time I had broken down I would have given up."

He takes the place on the bench occupied against Wales last month by Damian Hopley, the young Wasps centre.

England team

England team: N J Heslop (Oxford), W P G Carling (Harlequins), J C Goss (Bath), R Underwood (Leicester), C R Andrew (Worcester), J Hall (Bath), J Leonard (Leicester), R C Moore (Harlequins), J A Probyn (Worcester), M C Teague (Leicester), P A O'Driscoll (Leicester), J A Adcock (Leicester), D Riechers (Leicester), Riechers: J M Webb (Bath), S J Halliday (Harlequins), C D Morris (Oxford), P A O'Driscoll (Worcester), C J Gower (Northampton), M G Skinner (Harlequins).

His presence should also ensure that Will Carling and Jeremy Guscott, present and past club colleagues, perform to their optimum in the centre in a side unchanged from that which beat Wales 25-6 in Cardiff. Halliday would have trained with the national squad on Sunday but for the bad weather, which also prevented John Hall turning out for Bath and showing that he was fit enough to displace Mike Teague on the blind-side flank.

In fact, Teague's form against Wales made him an even-money bet to play against the Scots, whatever Hall's state of health. He has been able to play one game since recovering from the knee operation which removed him from contention for the game against the Welsh.

The team differs in four respects to that beaten 13-7 at Murrayfield 11 months ago. Nigel Heslop plays on the right wing rather than Halliday; Jason Leonard has ousted Paul Rendell as loose-head prop and Teague is on the flank rather than No. 8, where Dean Richards resumes.

The selectors will be anxious to see the weather improve so that the team can train tomorrow evening and on Thursday. The Rugby Football Union is equally keen for the game to be played since the Princess Royal is officially to open the new North Stand two hours before the kick-off on Saturday.

S Africa's invitation, page 37

Energetic England rule the white-water waves



Turbulent torrent: Six England cricketers — David Gower, Mike Atherton, John Morris, Martin Hicknell, Robin Smith and Phil Tufnell — test their reflexes while white-water rafting on the Harnau river, near Christchurch. The intrepid party ventured forth on a rest day after England's 14-run victory over New Zealand in the first of three one-day international matches on Saturday. Smith led the England scoring with 65 runs while Hicknell also played a leading role with three wickets. The teams meet again in Wellington tomorrow and in Auckland

United paying the price of beating the weather

By PETER BALL

ONCE again a cold spell has caught football on the hop. It will inevitably lead to further demands for clubs to follow the lead of Liverpool, where underoil heating has helped to provide a perfect playing surface in all weathers.

But as Manchester United, for one, are discovering, it is not that easy. Their new underoil heating system ensured that ITV got its live match last Sunday in a weekend when only five first-class games survived but, for the second week running, the pitch resembled a cobbled street rather than the flat surface which would allow quality teams to demonstrate their talents.

If anything, the pitch had been even worse a week earlier for the Liverpool match, doing few favours to either side, as Alex Ferguson said afterwards, when he also blamed it for the injuries which were to

COMMENT

deprive him of Webb and Phelan against Leeds. It has clearly done nothing to help United's pursuit of trophies, as Don Mackay, the manager of Blackburn Rovers — where they are experiencing similar problems — pointed out.

"A bad pitch suits the visitors, because they come to keep it tight and not give away goals, whereas we want to pass the ball, and the onus is on us to play," Mackay said.

"It didn't help us or Liverpool, because we want to pass the ball," Ferguson reflected, "but it is more of a problem for us because we have to play on it every week. Our players worry about it an hour before the start. So it is a bit of a handicap to us."

It is particularly frustrating for United, because earlier this season it had seemed as if their pitch problems were at an end. Three years ago, United's pitch was dreadful, the underoil heating failing to work satisfactorily, leaving a strip under the main stand which was virtually unplayable.

It was related in the summer of 1988, with new drainage installed and a gas-fired, hot water pipe heating system replacing the old electricity unit. As the new pitch bedded down, the improvement had been visible, and a meeting on November 5 last year agreed that the pitch was in its best condition for years.

Twelve days later, Bryan Robson's testimonial against Celtic ended with a mass celebration on the pitch. Manchester City had already discovered the damage that can be caused when their rolling

Stones concert left the traditionally immaculate Maine Road pitch in a mess at the start of the season.

United's experience was worse. Celtic supporters celebrated the occasion in familiar style by cutting sods of turf to take home as souvenirs. "The pitch has never really recovered," Ken Merrett, the club secretary, said yesterday. Any chance of recovery was ended over Christmas as wet weather and two matches in four days took their toll.

"The consultants say that we've lost the top surface. We've tried various things to bind it together, but it's a case of having to make do and mend until March or April when new grass starts to grow," Merrett added.

The removal of turf cannot be licensed for, but as Merrett remarked, the situation is exacerbated

by technological problems, the siting of the ground, and indeed the enclosing of it as the ground has been developed, preventing sun and wind from doing their old work.

"The new drains certainly work," Merrett said. "If anything, it drains too well. We watered it for three hours on Sunday, but the water just goes right through. And the underoil heating dries it out, which breaks it up — it's a vicious circle."

United are not the only club to find that progress has its price. Milan's pitch has suffered badly after the San Siro stadium's imposing development for the World Cup. As more and more stadiums are totally enclosed, and more employ underoil heating, teething problems are likely to multiply. It can be done, however. Anfield bears witness to that.



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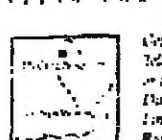
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